

Don't Miss

NEW EDUCATOR WEEKEND
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california

educator

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2017 VOLUME 21 ISSUE 5

THE 2017 INNOVATION ISSUE

RIDING THE WAVE

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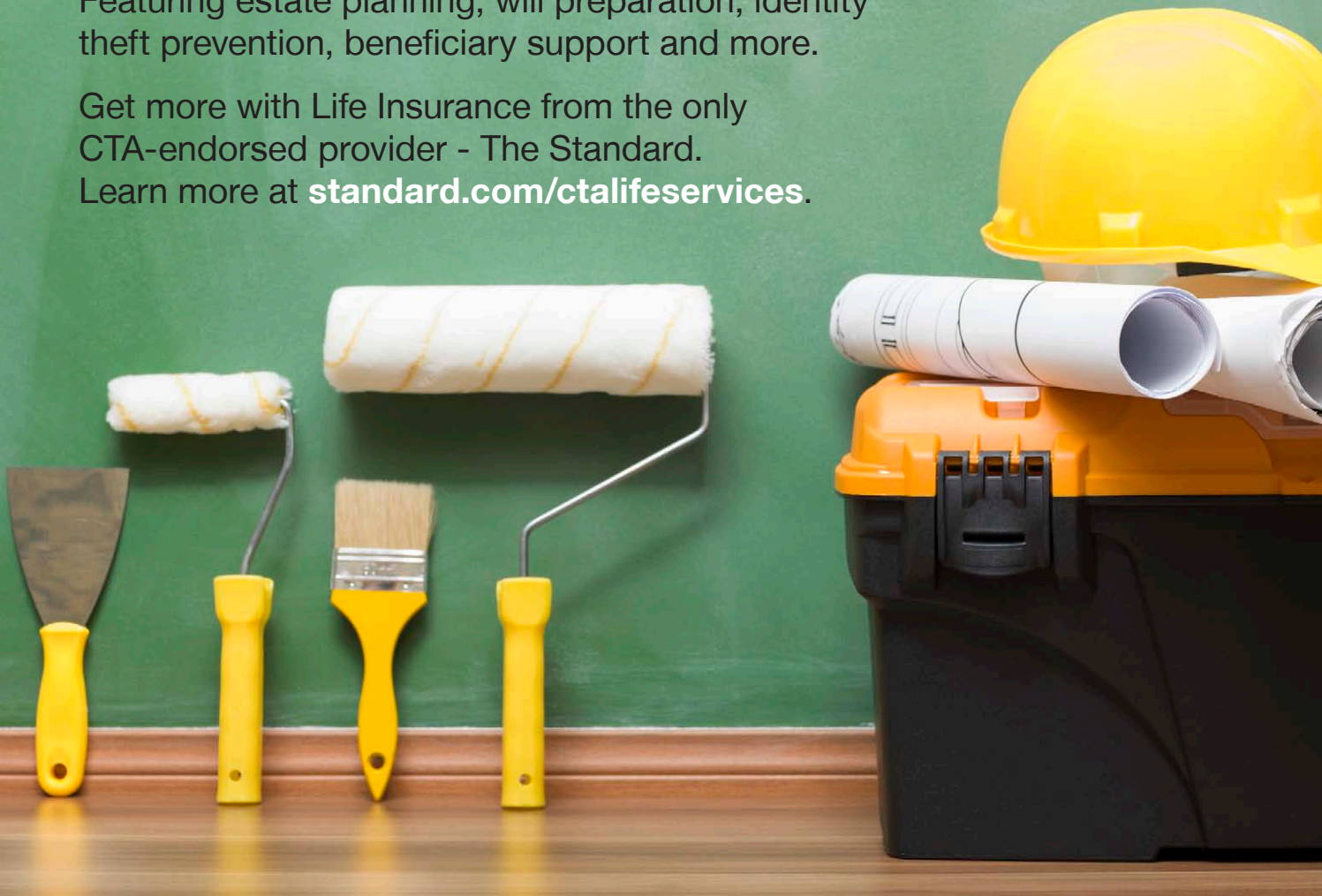


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#WeAreCTA OUR VOICE, OUR UNION, OUR PROFESSION



WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

MAGAZINE

These Educators Rock!

The innovators above connect with culture, community and students in a big way. **PAGE 20**

A Learning Moment

Frank Navarro was falsely accused and removed from his classroom. **PAGE 18**

Healthy Habits

Instead of strict diets, nutritionist Dawn Clifford focuses on care for your whole self. **PAGE 16**

Hungry Students

The first in an ongoing series that looks at what's being done now. **PAGE 32**

Keeping Students Safe

How educators are dealing with hostile acts on campus and soothing anxious students. **PAGE 44**

DIGITAL

Read Across America

Get ready for the annual read-a-thon March 2. **PAGE 8**
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TV: California Education

Newsmagazine show "Inside California Education" debuts on public television. **PAGE 11**
[f](#) [t](#) [insidecaled.org](#)

Be Bully-Free

Pledge to help make your school climate positive.
[f](#) [t](#) [nea.org/bullyfree](#)
[#neabullyfree](#)

Awesome Apps

There are now more than 4 million apps in the app stores. See our fave education apps of 2016. **PAGE 52**

ESPs Make a Difference

Watch NEA's animated video.
[t](#) [bit.ly/2f26sVT](#)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

New Educator Weekend

Don't miss CTA's new conference March 10-12 for educators with five or less years in the profession. **PAGE 10**

MLK Jr. Scholarships

Helps members of ethnic minorities prepare for careers in public education. Application deadline Feb. 17. **PAGE 9**

Good Teaching for You

Useful tips, cutting-edge curriculum and keen insights at CTA's Good Teaching Conference South, in Garden Grove March 17-19. **PAGE 9**

Go Global

Be an NEA Foundation Global Learning Fellow. **PAGE 8**

MEMBER BENEFITS

Theme Parks, Sports

Save big on your favorite theme park and sporting event tickets with Access to Savings. **PAGE 56**

Disaster Relief Fund

Financial assistance for those who have suffered significant losses, from floods to fire and more.
[ctamemberbenefits.org/drf](#)

Save for Retirement

Get peace of mind with CTA's Retirement Savings Plan, a 403(b) just for members.
[ctamemberbenefits.org/rsp](#)

Tax Break for Educators

Make sure you get it: Search "tax break" at [cta.org](#).

Above, from left: Al Rabanera, Bonnie Magill, Theresa Bradley, Crystal Standley, Kevin Jennings, Kory Bootsma, Dan Reynolds, Rosa RiVera Furumoto. Photos by Scott Buschman



THE 2017 INNOVATION ISSUE

RIDING THE WAVE

Educators in our second annual roundup of innovators show how ideas and action can make big a difference. We profile a visionary librarian, an activist committed to growing the teaching profession, a tireless human rights advocate, and others. **PAGE 20**

FEATURE

HUNGER ON CAMPUS

About a quarter of California children and youth experience food insecurity. The first stories in our “Hungry Students” series look at how colleges and schools are addressing this urgent issue.

Hunger in higher education. PAGE 32

Snapshot of educator efforts in K-12 schools. PAGE 35

Harvesting hope in our communities. PAGE 37



COVER:

Fullerton Secondary Teachers Organization member and innovative educator Al Rabanera.

THIS PAGE:

Left, students in a Manhood Development class in Oakland; right, San Ramon Valley Education Association educator Gary Leveque fights back against hate.

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YOUR OPINIONS ARE WELCOME! We accept email and letters (250-word limit); we excerpt user posts from CTA social media platforms. Content subject to editing for clarity and space. Photos must have identifications and permissions.
Editor@cta.org; #WeAreCTA



STEAMed Up

I had to look carefully at the cover of this month's *Educator*. I saw the letters STEM and was surprised.

Haven't you heard of STEAM? Science, Technology, Engineering, *Arts* and Math.

I thought we all had moved on to this improved, corrected, much better educational approach. California needs to educate all of its students with arts included, K through 14.

Without arts in the public school curriculum, we are creating incomplete humans. Unconscionable!

Please, CTA, get with the program!

FRED TEMPAS

*California Faculty Association,
Humboldt State University*

Editor's Note: The "STEM Stars" stories in the November/December issue reflect the current STEM focus at the California

Department of Education. Mr. Tempas is correct; the arts are an essential part of a well-rounded education.

Respect for Different Views

Diversity has disappeared in the *California Educator*. Several articles in the November/December issue declare a blatant disregard for many differing opinions.

The article "Stand Up for Students" promulgates the idea that students cannot function because their candidate wasn't chosen. What a horrible and untrue message for educators to send. The idea of "safe spaces" encourages weakness, crippling students' ability to accept rejection, respect a differing view, and become a well-rounded and stronger critical thinker.

There are literally hundreds of thousands of people who were emotionally and mentally distraught these past eight years under Obama's administration, the voices of conservatives trampled upon, forgotten, bullied. Where were the safe spaces then? Nonexistent. Why? Because of this so-called voice that pushes a very biased opinion instead of acknowledging the multiplicity of perspectives.

The idea of safe spaces caters to a single perspective, which is hugely inaccurate and harmful to the true representation of where all educators and students stand. We are not of the same mind. We are different. And we need to celebrate those differences.

In his President's Message, Eric Heins claims: "Many [students] are worried, and some of them, either immigrants themselves or from immigrant families, are legitimately frightened." He fails to stress the word "illegal." This is not about immigration. Donald Trump's wife Melania was born outside of the United States. Most of us *did* immigrate, and we did it lawfully. This is about breaking the law.

What the *Educator* is failing to remember is that our job as educators is to prepare students to be critical thinkers, to think for themselves and to be ready for the future, to learn how to deal with rejection, to stand strong even when things, like the election, don't go their way. In these past eight years, I personally heard from numerous students about financial stress due to Obamacare, being forced to give a good chunk of their paycheck to this health care, causing a major financial burden to them and their families. No resolution was set forth. No "fractured" society was declared.

The reality is that no president is responsible for your well-being. You are. If you want to stand up for what is right and fair, then all voices need to be heard, even those you don't agree with.

KRISTA WAGNER

*Riverside Community College District
Faculty Association*

For the Record

In our coverage of a video produced by California Casualty and SoulPancake (November/December, page 13), we were mistaken in not listing one of the educators as a CTA member. **LOVELL DEVON SMITH** has been "a proud CTA member of over 13 years." Smith was also a 2012 recipient of CTA's Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Scholarship. View the video at bit.ly/2e35Ssa.





CCTC Approved Reading and Literacy Added Authorization

UC San Diego Extension offers the CCTC Approved Reading and Literacy Added Authorization (previously referred to as Reading Certificate) which is a comprehensive program of study that provides students with a solid foundation in the research and methods of reading instruction.

The Reading and Literacy Added Authorization program is geared towards teachers with the potential to become leaders and mentors in the area of reading. It will provide educators with the right tools to improve student achievement.

Program Highlights:

- The program provides participants with the skills to develop a research-based program of reading instruction for implementation in their own classrooms or as a resource for other classroom teachers
- This certificate is aligned with the requirements and standards established by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC).
- **100% online**

To view credential requirements, the program FAQs and to download an application please visit our Reading Instruction at extension.ucsd.edu/teachreading

UC San Diego Extension also offers accessible and affordable online programs for K-12 and Postsecondary Educators.

- New courses begin every month
- Most programs can be completed online within 1 year
- Interactive, Research-Based Programs with Practical Classroom Application

Programs include:

- CCTC-Approved Clear Credential Program
- CCTC Approved CLAD Through CTEL Program
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- Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) Specialized Certificate
- Teaching Adult Learners Professional Certificate
- Teaching Online Certificate
- Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Professional Certificate
- Professional Development/Salary Point Coursework

For more information, please contact Morgan Appel,
Director of Education at: (858) 534-9273 or mappel@ucsd.edu

extension.ucsd.edu/education

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CTA/NEA membership dues for the fiscal year (Sept. 1, 2016, to Aug. 31, 2017) are \$843, including a \$20 refundable contribution (see cta.org/contribution for details). Up to \$18.62 of CTA annual dues is designated for CTA/ABC political activities to support state and local candidates and/or initiatives and is not deductible for income tax purposes.

Subscription to the *California Educator* is \$10 per year, available to persons or institutions not eligible for CTA/NEA membership.

CALIFORNIA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

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MISSION STATEMENT

The California Teachers Association exists to protect and promote the well-being of its members; to improve the conditions of teaching and learning; to advance the cause of free, universal, and quality public education; to ensure that the human dignity and civil rights of all children and youth are protected; and to secure a more just, equitable, and democratic society.

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Hidden Innovators

BOLD THINKERS, fearless trailblazers, risk takers.

These are characteristics of true innovators, much like the women depicted in the new movie *Hidden Figures*. The film tells the story of three African American former school teachers, Katherine Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan and Mary Jackson. Their math and engineering innovation — and successful fight against Jim Crow and rampant sexism — at NASA during the early 1960s helped launch America's space program. The title (based on the book by Margot Lee Shetterly) is, of course, a play on words, as these women and their contribution to history went largely unnoticed until now.

And what a history it is — so inspiring to women and girls, people of color, and others who are often unseen.

I frequently encounter this kind of unsung but vitally important innovation in my visits to classrooms all over California. It's the kind that moves me to continue to advocate on behalf of public education. Quality teaching and deep learning require innovation, and CTA members deliver on that every single day.

Innovation doesn't come about in a vacuum. That's why CTA is committed to fostering and supporting innovation that leads to student success, and why we allocate significant resources in support of classroom creativity. Over the past seven years our Institute for Teaching has awarded more than \$2 million in grants to members to help them implement their vision for student achievement. Our Good Teaching Conferences showcase innovation as members come together to share and demonstrate exciting classroom ideas. Our Advocacy Agenda argues that education professionals should lead the profession and that teacher-directed professional development and curriculum is the most effective.

Not only are we pioneering new ideas in our individual classrooms and as a union, but as a state California is also leading the nation in education innovation. The new Local Control Funding Formula (based on the same philosophy as CTA's successful Quality Education Investment Act) and Local Control and Accountability Plan system are returning funding and program decisions to the local stakeholders who know better than anyone what is best for their students. CTA has successfully ensured that California's new accountability systems include multiple measures of progress and don't just rely on a single test score.

Unfortunately, while California continues to support the right kind of innovation, in Washington the new administration is



Eric Heins at UTLA's Reclaim Our Schools day of action Jan. 19.

"We are making sure our students know that our schools are a safe place to learn and grow. We will not let anyone destroy the promise of a quality public education for all students."

resurrecting the wrong kinds — ideas like private school vouchers and unregulated corporate charters, which have already largely failed students where they were tried and have left a damaged public school system in their wake.

We will not let this happen in California. CTA is leading the charge against the education privatization agenda. In

California, we are investing in our public schools and providing additional resources to districts serving our most at-risk youth. We are engaging our local communities in building strong neighborhood schools that teach all students. We are leading the way in defining a new accountability system that looks at the whole child, not just a test score. And we are making sure our students know that our schools are a safe place to learn and grow. We will not let anyone destroy the promise of a quality public education for all students. Not on our watch!

As we celebrate Black History Month, it's worth noting what George Washington Carver said: "Where there is no vision, there is no hope." We find and celebrate the innovators and visionaries among us, because they give hope and inspiration to their students, and to the rest of us.

Eric C. Heins
CTA PRESIDENT
[@ericheins](#)

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CHANGE THE WORLD FROM HERE

Eyes Wide Open

"All men dream: but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds wake in the day to find that it was vanity: but the dreamers of the day are dangerous men, for they may act their dream with open eyes, to make it possible."
—T.E. Lawrence

The quote by Lawrence of Arabia, while dated, describes the educators showcased in our **2017 Innovation Issue** (page 20), all of whom have acted on their dreams, and in so doing have made a difference in the lives of students and colleagues. Al Rabanera, who graces our cover and finds the quote particularly moving, has strengthened the profession by establishing teacher mentoring and training programs. Kory Bootsma has turned school libraries into thriving Makerspaces. Kevin Jennings guides African American boys to manhood.

Bonnie Magill instills in her young charges the joys of agriculture. Dan Reynolds tirelessly advocates for human rights. Theresa Bradley and Crystal Standley teach critical life skills to students with special needs. And Rosa RiVera Furumoto's multigenerational lessons blend Native American folklore and Latino heritage with STEAM education.

Innovative educators are everywhere, of course, not just in our special section. Fifth-grade teacher Tammy Dunbar champions the tenets of **Genius Hour** (page



Kevin Jennings teaches a Manhood Development class in Oakland.

Innovation Everywhere

Speaking of innovation, CTA's **New Educator Weekend** is a must for those with five years or less in the profession. This new conference, March 10-12, offers a fun and energizing format, and will give you the tools, resources and network you need for both your career and your personal life. See story on page 10. [#ctanew](#)
We're always on the lookout for creative educators who are implementing unique ideas in service of students and the profession. Do you know an innovator? Let us know at editor@cta.org.

13), because students who find and pursue their passions — their genius — learn to love learning. Nutrition professor Dawn Clifford ("**Healthy Eating**," page 16) has been recognized for her novel approach to teaching, which involves hands-on simulations complete with mannequins.

Tough times often result in innovation. As our feature "**Hunger on Campus**" (page 32) describes, schools, educators and communities are coming together in inventive ways to address increasing numbers of food insecure students and families. On-campus food pantries, snack stations and free farmers' markets tackle the immediate problem; longer-term approaches include on-campus gardens, nutrition and cooking classes, and perhaps most importantly, inspiring educators and students to become advocates and activists to eradicate hunger.

Other examples of innovative solutions

to difficult issues are present in "**Fighting Back Against Hate**" (page 44). Educators are rallying to teach tolerance and inclusiveness in the face of hateful graffiti, assaults and bullying, which have been on the rise at schools throughout the state. Their actions and strategies aim to improve school climate and ensure the safety of all students, especially the most vulnerable populations.

Educators know that when students' basic needs — the need to be safe, to be nourished physically and mentally — are met, they will flourish and grow. It's a hopeful dream that becomes reality when we keep our eyes open, and act.

Katharine Fong
EDITOR IN CHIEF
editor@cta.org



Read Across America

MARCH 2 is NEA's Read Across America (RAA) Day, a day for students, educators, schools and communities to celebrate reading. Plan now for activities, such as inviting special guests — parents, firefighters, the mayor — to read their favorite books.

While RAA, sponsored by NEA, CTA and many of the country's leading literacy and youth groups, celebrates its 20th anniversary this year, encourage your students to read all year long. The more children read, the better they read. And the more they read outside of school, the better they do in school. See CTA's California Reads (cta.org/californiareads) for quarterly teacher-approved book recommendations for all ages. More information and classroom resources for RAA at nea.org/readacross and [#readacrossamerica](https://twitter.com/readacrossamerica).



Books for the New Year

What better way to start off the new year than with a few good books? Look no further than California Reads recommendations for stories that students will love and remember for years.

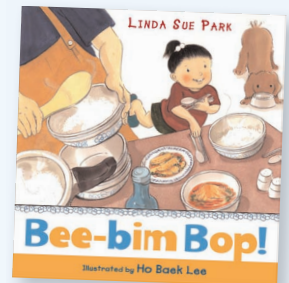
Ally, the protagonist in *Fish in a Tree* by Lynda Mullaly Hunt (grades 6-8), hides her inability to read by creating clever distractions. But her newest teacher, Mr. Daniels, sees the bright, creative kid underneath the troublemaker. When tests show she has dyslexia, he helps her learn to read and gain confidence in herself.



When the Beat Was Born, by Laban Carrick Hill and illustrated by Theodore Taylor III (grades 3-5), is a story of hip-hop's beginnings. In summer 1973, Clive Campbell spun the records for a party in the South Bronx. Calling himself DJ Kool Herc, he played the music to make the breaks (the musical interludes between verses) longer for dancing. The book tells how Kool Herc came to be a DJ, how kids in gangs stopped fighting to break-dance, and how hip-hop went on to define a culture and transform the world.

The joys of family and food are evident in *Bee-bim Bop!* by Linda Sue Park and illustrated by Ho Baek Lee (pre-K, kindergarten). In rhyming text and charming illustrations, a hungry child helps her mother make the traditional Korean dish of mixed rice. They shop, prepare ingredients, set the table, and sit down to enjoy the meal.

Check out cta.org/californiareads for more recommended books. [#californiareads](https://twitter.com/californiareads)



BUILD YOUR GLOBAL SKILLS

The NEA Foundation knows that for students to prepare for the global age, educators must first be equipped with the knowledge, skills and disposition needed to teach in the global age. How best for students to become knowledgeable about the world and see it from various perspectives? How best to communicate across cultures?

The foundation's Global Learning Fellowship offers educators 12 months of professional development to support them as they build global competence skills and create their own lesson plans to share with educators around the world. Fellows also experience nine days of international field study. All active NEA classroom teachers are eligible to apply; application deadline is Feb. 28, 2017. For details, see neafoundation.org/pages/global-learning-fellowship.

DON'T MISS:

New Educator Weekend MARCH 10-12 CONFERENCE

Irvine Marriott. This new conference is for educators in their first five years. It's an excellent induction program, offering over 12 hours of professional development, and includes sessions and electives on classroom management, the new state standards, assessments, navigating IEPs and special education, and resources and programs available to members. Registration is only \$49 for CTA members, including materials and most meals. Hotel cut-off date is Feb. 18. See story on page 10. ► [#ctanew](http://ctago.org)

NATIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELING WEEK

FEBRUARY 6-10 EVENT

Celebrate your counselor! School counselors make unique contributions to education and can have tremendous impact on students' academic success and career plans. ► schoolcounselor.org

POLITICAL ACADEMY SOUTH

FEBRUARY 10-12 CONFERENCE

Hilton San Diego Airport. Offers hands-on learning that encompasses the skills and knowledge needed to run successful political campaigns. Hotel cut-off date is Jan. 27. ► ctago.org

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. SCHOLARSHIPS

FEBRUARY 17 APPLICATION DEADLINE

Aimed at helping members of ethnic minorities prepare for careers in public education, the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Scholarship Fund is supported by voluntary contributions from CTA members and the CTA Foundation for Teaching and Learning. An applicant must be an active CTA or Student CTA member, or a dependent child of a CTA member. Past recipients have received up to \$6,000. ► cta.org/scholarships

CCA WINTER CONFERENCE

FEBRUARY 24-26 CONFERENCE

Westin Bonaventure Hotel, Los Angeles. The Community College Association's winter conference focuses on enhancing bargaining skills and coordinating bargaining strategies with other locals. Bargaining teams are encouraged to attend. Hotel cut-off date is Feb. 9. ► cca4me.org

CTA/NEA-RETIRED ISSUES CONFERENCE

MARCH 2-3 CONFERENCE

Fairmont Hotel, San Jose. Make the most of retirement! Learn how CTA/NEA-Retired is working to protect your future and closely

watching federal legislation that affects retirement benefits. Stay connected, be protected, and enjoy great benefits. Hotel cut-off date is Feb. 8. ► ctago.org

EQUITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS CONFERENCE

MARCH 3-5 CONFERENCE

Fairmont Hotel, San Jose. This conference affirms CTA's mission to protect the civil rights of children and secure a more equitable, democratic society. Speakers and workshops provide members with a greater understanding of diversity, equity and social justice. Hotel cut-off date is Feb. 8.

► [#ctaehr](http://ctago.org)

POLITICAL ACADEMY NORTH

MARCH 10-12 CONFERENCE

Hilton San Jose. Offers hands-on learning that encompasses the skills and knowledge needed to run successful political campaigns. Hotel cut-off date is Feb. 24.

► ctago.org

GOOD TEACHING CONFERENCE SOUTH

MARCH 17-19 CONFERENCE

Hyatt Regency Orange County, Garden Grove. Supports excellent teaching and learning practices for K-12 teachers, offers a variety of workshops in curriculum content areas, provides opportunities for professional development, and allows time to network with colleagues and experts. Hotel cut-off date is March 2. ► [#ctagtc](http://ctago.org)

NEA HIGHER EDUCATION CONFERENCE

MARCH 17-19 CONFERENCE

Renaissance Dallas Hotel, Dallas, Texas. "Unite. Inspire. Lead: Strengthening Bridges to Opportunities." Share information, develop skill, and network with others within the higher ed community. A daylong Leadership Day organizing activity will be held March 16. ► nea.org/home/1602.htm

Coming Up

Political Academy South

Feb. 10-12
San Diego

CCA Winter Conference

Feb. 24-26
Los Angeles

Read Across America

March 2

CTA/NEA-Retired Issues Conference

March 2-3
San Jose

Equity and Human Rights Conference

March 3-5
San Jose

New Educator Weekend

March 10-12
Irvine

Political Academy North

March 10-12
San Jose

Good Teaching Conference South

March 17-19
Garden Grove

CCA Spring Conference

April 21-23
Manhattan Beach

Joint Ethnic Caucus Issues Conference

May 5-7
Manhattan Beach

California Day of the Teacher

May 10

CTA Education Support Professionals Day

May 23*

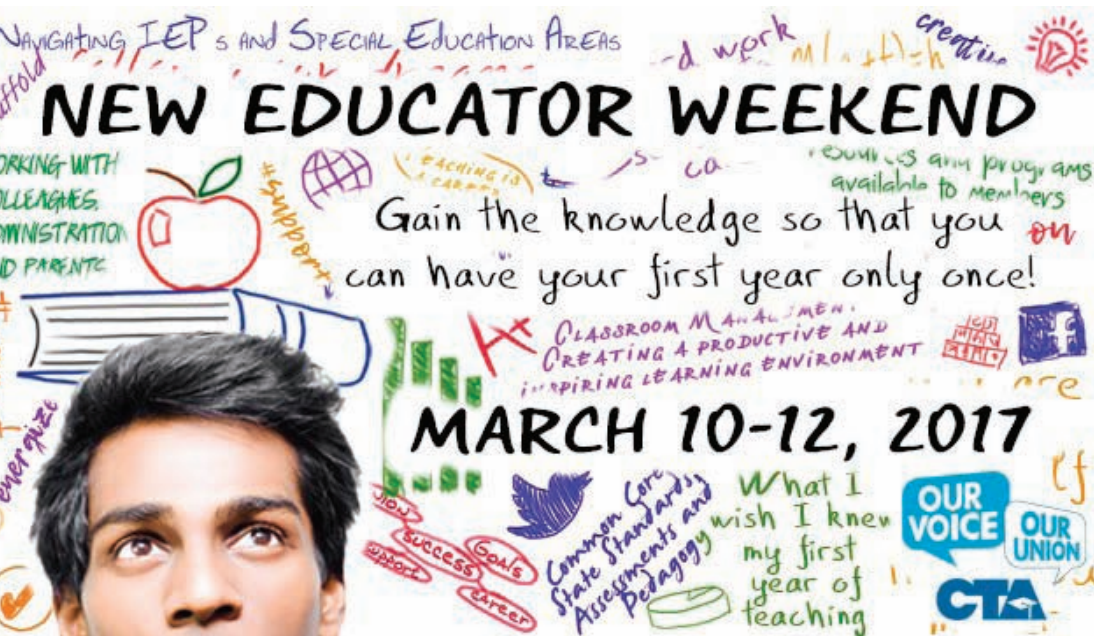
Presidents Conference

July 20-23
San Jose

Summer Institute

July 30-Aug. 3
Los Angeles

*CTA's 2016-17 Pocket Calendar lists incorrect dates for ESP Week, which is May 21-27, and CTA ESP Day, which is Tuesday, May 23.



Calling all new educators!

CTA's new conference is a must for those with 5 or less years in the profession. #ctanew

New Educator Weekend MARCH 10-12, 2017

THE FIRST-EVER NEW EDUCATOR WEEKEND CONFERENCE, March 10-12 in Irvine, has everything an educator with five or less years in the profession needs. It starts on Friday evening with cocktails, colleagues and comedy. On Saturday, attend sessions of interest, learn from successful and inspiring educators, reflect with other participants, and talk about what lies ahead. Sunday morning features more sessions and a closing brunch with a keynote speaker.

"The New Educator Weekend is a way for CTA to connect and address the needs of new teachers and younger members," says CTA President Eric Heins. "We're eager to meet with you and hear what you have to say."

Session topics include:

- Classroom management.
- Navigating IEPs and special education areas.
- What I wish I knew my first years of teaching.
- Working with colleagues, administration and parents.
- Common Core, state standards, assessments and pedagogy.
- Teaching as a career.
- Resources and programs available to members.

Registration is \$49 for CTA members (\$10 for Student CTA; \$250 for nonmembers), which includes the opening reception, most meals and all materials. Districts may pay the registration fee, as this event offers over 12 hours of professional development and is as an excellent induction program for new educators. See ctago.org. #ctanew

Special preconference: Come early on Friday, March 10, for a free preconference for new educators getting started in their careers. Get help with student loans, budgeting, saving for your future, and more. Includes lunch and speaker Rob Black, host of *Rob Black & Your Money*.



Sylvia Mendez
to speak at CCA
Conference

IN SEPTEMBER 1943, 9-year-old Sylvia Mendez and her brothers were denied enrollment at their neighborhood school in Orange County and told to enroll at the "Mexican" school 10 blocks away. Her parents and four other families successfully sued the school districts in 1945 in a landmark California desegregation case, *Mendez v. Westminster*.

Mendez, a civil rights activist and recipient of the 2010 Presidential Medal of Freedom, is the keynote speaker at the Community College Association Winter Conference, Feb. 24-26 at the Westin Bonaventure Hotel in Los Angeles. The conference includes standout trainings, with a focus on bargaining and coordinating bargaining strategies. See cca4me.org for details.



Scene from "Inside California Education": Students at Wolf Canyon Elementary, where the school district used local control funds for an enhanced arts program.

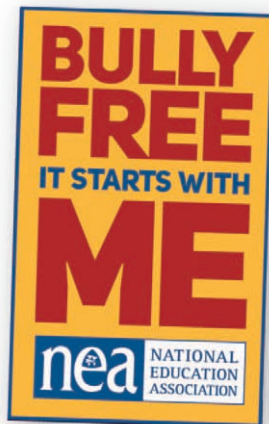


Black History Month

FEBRUARY IS BLACK HISTORY MONTH, which honors the contributions of African Americans to the history, culture and education of the United States. In class, share the stories of African Americans throughout history and inspire young readers to learn more about their relevance today. **Resources and lesson plans are at cta.org/awareness and nea.org/tools/lessons/black-history-month.htm. #blackhistorymonth**

Take the Pledge

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT in schools have taken an upward turn, as our stories beginning on page 44 show. Help make your school a safe and affirming learning environment by taking the pledge at nea.org/bullyfree (right), where you'll also find resources and toolkits. Research shows it takes at least six educators to begin to impact school climate, so urge colleagues to join you. The benefits to student success are social, emotional and academic. See page 51 for a sign you can cut out and post to let students know they're in a safe zone. #bullyfree



California Education Gets the TV Treatment

"INSIDE CALIFORNIA EDUCATION" is a new public television series that explores education throughout the state.

The 13 half-hour episodes in news-magazine format shed light on challenging, critical issues and how the state's evolving education system impacts students and everyone in California.

Segments emanate from Redding to Brawley and examine such topics as the teacher shortage and housing crunch in San Francisco, the artistic revival in San Diego schools, and a Sacramento summer school that students actually want to attend.

According to executive producers Richard Launey and Larry Miles, the goal of "Inside California Education" is to enhance understanding and appreciation of public education in California, and, by so doing, foster better educational public policy and improved student learning. The pilot episode won CTA's 2015 John Swett Excellence in Educational Media Award.

The series is co-produced by KVIE, a public television station in Sacramento, and NationalEdOnline, a California-based education nonprofit. Check local listings for showtimes, or watch online at insidecaled.org.

A counselor's influence

EXACTLY WHAT KIND of impact can a high school counselor have on a student's future? A lot, as it turns out. A new study from the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) shows that 12th-grade students who meet one-on-one with a school counselor to discuss college admission or financial aid are:

- 6.8 times more likely to complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) — the application for financial aid.
- 3.2 times more likely to attend college.
- Twice as likely to attend a bachelor's degree program.

The NACAC report, "How Can High School Counseling Shape Students' Postsecondary Attendance?" is one of the few analyses that measure the impact school counselors have on students' lives after high school graduation.

"These new findings offer proof of what educators have long known — school counselors play a critical role in encouraging students to plan for the future and navigate the college application process," says NACAC CEO Joyce Smith. "As the country looks for ways to boost college-going rates, NACAC's research proves that investing in school counselors is a powerful strategy to encourage equal access to postsecondary education." For the full study, see bit.ly/2i7Fmja.



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GENIUS!

Give students time to find and follow their passion

IMAGINE YOUR CLASSROOM is a place where students' passion-driven genius work is routine. Students experiment with their ideas, discover new possibilities, and support one another as they share their findings and creations with the world.

Fifth-grade teacher Tammy Dunbar is a big proponent of "Genius Hour," a time during the school day when students are invited to explore what moves them — through research, experimentation, collaboration and communication. The starting questions for each student are: Who are the geniuses in your life? What are their characteristics? What's your genius?

Dunbar, Manteca Educators Association, has used Genius Hour over the past four years to great success. It has let her guide students to be effective learners and citizens by helping them connect what they do in school to the broader community. In the process, many do better on tests and develop new leadership skills.

"During Genius Hour, they study whatever they want to," says Dunbar, who will give a presentation on the topic at CTA's Good Teaching Conference North. "It's heavy on research, skills-building and problem solving. Students will work hard at something they're invested in."

For example, a student who was

interested in architecture found a blueprint app and started building small houses.

"One boy learned how to make tamales," Dunbar recalls. "He filmed his grandmother making them and practiced making them, then he made the final batch. He showed us the video of him and his *abuela*."

Love of learning

With Genius Hour, students "learn to love learning," she says. "That joy makes them want to share their knowledge with others."

Educator Angela Maiers, founder of Choose2Matter, a movement that challenges and inspires students to work collaboratively to develop innovative solutions to social problems, helped launch Genius Hour in schools. She wrote *Liberating Genius in the Classroom* as a guide to preparing students for Genius Hour, and asked Dunbar to "test-drive" the lessons.

"When she approached me, it was the end of our first trimester," says Dunbar, who in addition to teaching in Manteca Unified School District is an instructor at Teachers College of San Joaquin in Stockton. "At end of the second trimester, student scores went up dramatically. They felt more confident about the skills, talents and gifts they saw in themselves."

Dunbar also noticed this newfound pride and confidence in her students' leadership efforts, even as they moved up in grades. They wrote a press release for the local newspaper about the school's food

TEACHER GEEK PRESENTATION

At Good Teaching Conference North, Tammy Dunbar will also present "Teacher Geek Is Chic!" on how the new standards' emphasis on collaboration, communication, creativity and critical thinking (the four C's) can integrate with 21st century skills and technology.

"I want to make tech accessible so we're not afraid of it," Dunbar says. "It's OK if students see you struggle with it. They'll think, 'Huh, she's struggling and not afraid of failing and learning. I can do that too!'"

She will show samples of what tech looks like in the classroom, from free Web tools to Breakout EDU, an immersive game similar to Escape the Room. Breakout lets students use the four C's to brainstorm and solve puzzles using core subject skills. "Students love it," she says. "They don't mind sticking with the problem till they find the answer."

For Dunbar, these are tools you can use right now. "I like to talk about things a teacher can see at a CTA conference and go back to class on Monday and actually use."

Tammy Dunbar will present "Liberating Genius" and "Teacher Geek Is Chic!" at CTA's Good Teaching Conference North, Feb. 3-5 in San Jose. For information and to register, see ctago.org #ctagtc

drive, and donations to the drive doubled from the year before. This year, all school officer positions are filled by students from her first Genius Hour year.

Genius Hour, says Dunbar, develops a muscle in kids that can last a lifetime. "Educators must craft learning situations and opportunities for students involving stamina and perseverance that will stretch their problem-solving muscle," she says. "You only strengthen a muscle if you use it." ■

Quotes & Numbers

Compiled by Mike Myslinski



46TH

Ranking nationally of California in per-pupil spending in a newly released *Education Week* annual "Quality Counts" study, based on 2014 data. It's identical to last year's ranking.

\$3,462

Amount California is below the national average in per-pupil funding, according to the same *Education Week* study.

50,000

Approximate number of California educators who have received professional development trainings in the past two years from teachers who are part of CTA's Instructional Learning Corps. Learn more about the ILC project at cta.org/ilc.

41%

Decline in the amount California spends, when adjusted for inflation, on a California State University student today compared to 1985, according to a new California Faculty Association study released Jan. 12. See calfac.org.

60%

Percentage of Americans who feel President Trump should release his tax returns, according to a Pew Research Center poll released a day before Trump's Jan. 11 news conference, where he claimed the public doesn't "care at all" if he releases his returns — only the reporters do.

"In this time of uncertainty, anxiety and fear, I strongly encourage you to join me in declaring our public schools 'safe havens' for students and their parents, and to remind families about existing laws that protect them and their students' records from questions about immigration status."

—State Superintendent of Public Instruction **TOM TORLAKSON**, in a Dec. 21 letter to administrators and superintendents of California's 10,500 public schools.

"This completes the final pieces of a groundbreaking system to help the public better understand what is going on in our schools. I look forward to the launch of the California School Dashboard later this year, but this is just the beginning. We plan to make significant improvements in future years."

—State Board of Education President **MIKE KIRST**, in a Jan. 11 statement after the SBE approved final elements of the nuanced public school accountability system that will replace the old Academic Performance Index.

"As they hear about a school, drive past a school, see a school in the news, I hope people can make some positive assumptions and figure that in any school you go to, there are going to be some fantastic people doing some excellent work."

—Palo Alto High School teacher **DAVID B. COHEN**, in a Dec. 22 EdSource article about his new book on innovative California teachers, *Capturing the Spark: Inspired Teaching, Thriving Schools*.

"DeVos' lack of experience in any public school in any capacity and of a degree in education is a slap in the face to millions of educators across the country. For the first time, our secretary of education could be someone whose sole 'qualification' for the job is the two decades she has spent attempting to dismantle and privatize the American public school system."

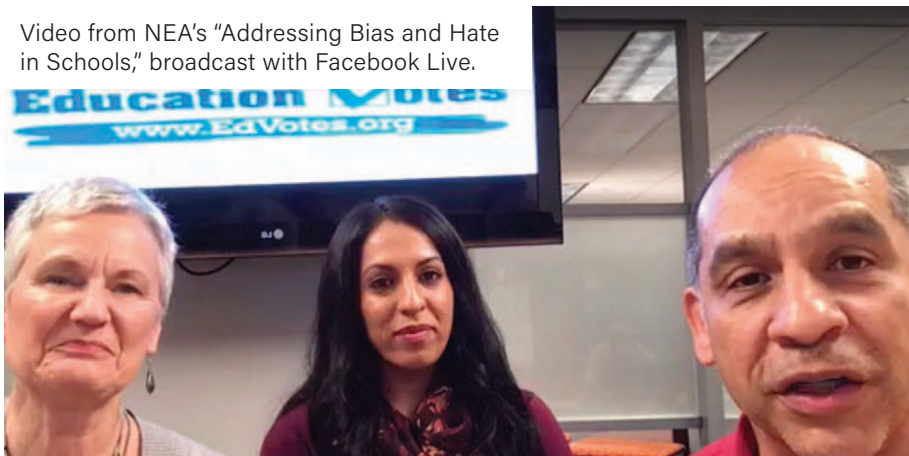
—CTA President **ERIC HEINS**, in his Jan. 11 letter urging California Senators Dianne Feinstein and Kamala Harris to oppose Betsy DeVos, Donald Trump's nominee for U.S. education secretary.

"If something needs fixing, then lace up your shoes and do some organizing. If you're disappointed by your elected officials, grab a clipboard, get some signatures, and run for office yourself. Show up. Dive in. Stay at it."

—President **BARACK OBAMA**, in his Jan. 10 farewell address in Chicago.

By @samdemuro

Video from NEA's "Addressing Bias and Hate in Schools," broadcast with Facebook Live.



Connect With Facebook Live

Facebook Live is a way to broadcast a video in real time, posted directly to your wall. Viewers — your Facebook friends — receive a notification when you start broadcasting, and can comment and give immediate feedback.

Educators are using Facebook Live to connect with other educators. They share classroom management tips, lesson plans and other resources. Most promote the topic, along with the day and time when they will be "live," so you can go to their Facebook page to tune in. Some even bring on other educators to have a panel-type broadcast. If you miss the live video, Facebook posts the video and you're still able to access it.

Interested in broadcasting your own video? Make sure you have strong Wi-Fi, good lighting and a fully charged phone or device (Facebook Live only works on an app on your phone or tablet). Check out how NEA utilized Facebook Live for their November 2016 conversation "Addressing Bias and Hate in Schools" at bit.ly/2iXGo0A.

Glossary

tl;dr: "Too long; didn't read" is used to identify excessive wordiness, and to suggest a short summary or sentence is needed.

Listicle: A kind of article presented in a numbered or bullet point list form.

Digital Detox: A period of time when a person refrains from using smartphones, computers, social media, etc., to reduce stress and focus on in-person interactions.

Oversharer: Someone who discloses too much private information on social media. Subject to opinion.

Regram: The act of reposting another Instagram user's image or video on your Instagram. While the Instagram app doesn't allow you to do this within their app, you can download the Repost app and others that will help you "regram."

IRL: "In Real Life" is used most often to refer to Instagram or Pinterest posts that seem glamorous or easy with the help of filters and perfectly positioned cameras, but don't work that way IRL.

Meme of the Month

WHAT PEOPLE DON'T UNDERSTAND ABOUT TEACHING IS THAT IT STICKS WITH YOU, ALL THE TIME. THERE IS NO GETTING UP FROM YOUR DESK AT THE END OF THE DAY AND WALKING AWAY. I THINK ABOUT MY STUDENTS AS I FALL ASLEEP AT NIGHT AND FIRST THING IN THE MORNING. I REALIZE THAT A LOT OF JOBS ARE 24/7 THESE DAYS, BUT THERE'S A UNIQUE EMOTIONAL LABOR TO TEACHING THAT OFTEN GOES UNNOTICED.



TWEETED



jess'kaah lee @jess4wondering · 10 Dec 2016
Grateful for my first #ctagblt conference. Def joining the right profession, a whole community fighting for safer schools for our Ss.

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For our full social media directory, see cta.org/social



Healthy Eating

Dawn Clifford offers novel nutrition approach

By Sherry Posnick-Goodwin
Photos by Scott Buschman

Nutrition professor Dawn Clifford doesn't feed others a steady diet of scare tactics or guilt when it comes to fostering healthy habits for eating right and staying fit. Instead, she takes a much more positive approach that's compassionate and nonjudgmental, and puts clients in the driver's seat of their health decisions.

"The best thing is take the focus off what the scale says and start caring well for yourself," says Clifford, a dietician and director of the Didactic Program in Dietetics at CSU Chico's Department of Nutrition and Food Science. "Instead of telling clients what to eat and when to eat it, I believe in putting the client in charge of their own health to empower them."

Clifford passes this philosophy along to her students, future dietitians who will one day work in the public or private sector, perhaps in schools, hospitals or government. Since 2006 she has taught courses in nutrition counseling, nutrition education and medical nutrition at the university.

In 2014 this California Faculty Association member received the Outstanding Educator Award from the Cleveland-based Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, the world's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals, for her innovative teaching methods and programs.

She used a grant to create a "simulation center" experience for dietetics students in 2011, using lifelike mannequins. Actors spoke through the mannequins via microphones to share their "symptoms," while her students had to diagnose their conditions and prescribe appropriate diets. For example, students might have to decide how many calories and grams of protein a critically ill patient needs, along with specific amounts of fats, vitamins, minerals and fluids.

The scenarios offered students hands-on experiences of reviewing medical records, conducting assessment interviews, discussing nutrition



"Instead of telling clients what to eat and when to eat it, I believe in putting the client in charge of their own health to empower them."

interventions, and interacting with actors posing as health care professionals.

Outside the classroom, she helped develop a peer-led internship program called FitU, which trains students to conduct one-on-one nutrition and fitness counseling sessions with peers. The program, designed to help young people navigate meal planning as they gain independence for the first time, uses a holistic approach for all students — whether living in the dorms or learning to cook for the first time.

"I want them to develop healthier relationships with food and their bodies," says Clifford. "I want them to learn patterns that are sustainable."

She created a course on Health at Every Size, an approach gaining national momentum that emphasizes

In Dawn's words:

Health at Every Size has been called controversial because...

there is a misunderstanding about the term. It doesn't mean a person is healthy at every size. Instead, it means that every person at every size deserves to be treated well, and we can't rely on a scale to tell if someone's healthy or not. We should look at things like blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar, emotional health, depression and stress management, along with physical activity, endurance and stamina. Health is multifaceted.

It's time to think differently about health and size...

since research shows that most of the time when people lose weight they gain it back. So the traditional weight loss paradigm isn't working. Some bodies are meant to be larger and may fall into the overweight or obese category because of genetics. Instead of being told not to eat certain foods and going on a binging spree, Health at Any Size is about helping people practice gentle self-care and settle at the weight they are supposed to be at, based on their genetics. It's about not focusing on what the scale says, but taking care of yourself. Instead of dieting, it's about developing healthy patterns for life. It's about being physically active to foster emotional health.

My students are needed as peer counselors...

because college students are often skipping meals, using diet pills and eating out a lot. During appointments, they learn how to put a basic meal together in under 15 minutes with a few different food groups. It can save them money. My health coaches are trained to talk about body image and help students find different ways to love their bodies and current size, so they accept themselves instead of always striving to look different.



Dawn Clifford with Stacy Carlson and a mannequin that serves as a client.

body acceptance and positive food and exercise experiences. The term was trademarked by The Association for Size Diversity and Health, a group of professionals who believe the traditional weight loss paradigm does little to support overall health and well-being of clients, and instead results in weight bias and discrimination.

"Patients avoid their doctors and dietitians when they are told to lose weight," Clifford says. "We need a new, compassionate model that supports health behaviors for individuals of all sizes with less focus on the scale."

With former student Laura Curtis, Clifford co-authored a book on nutrition counseling, *Motivational Interviewing in Nutrition and Fitness*, encouraging clients to lead the way in devising realistic goals.

"Clients do better when they talk themselves into change," she explains. ■

Health at Every Size Principles

- Accept, respect the diversity of body shapes and sizes; promote health and well-being for people of all sizes.
- Recognize health, well-being as multidimensional; includes physical, social, spiritual, occupational, emotional and intellectual aspects.
- Promote eating in a way that balances individual nutritional needs, hunger, satiety, appetite and pleasure.
- Promote individually appropriate, enjoyable, life-enhancing physical activity, rather than exercise focused on weight loss.

A Learning Moment

Falsely accused, an educator urges more and better communication

My name is Frank Navarro. I have taught social studies for 40 years. I teach at Mountain View High School in Silicon Valley. I love teaching about democracy, the importance of government, and cultures around the world.

I was recently astounded to find myself the subject of international news. It happened when a parent sent an email to my school complaining that I had called Donald Trump “Hitler.” I was temporarily removed from the classroom. It was one of the most traumatic events of my life.

I was falsely accused; I never said Donald Trump was Hitler. That would be sloppy historical thinking. I *did* say that Donald Trump had fascist characteristics. I pointed out some remarkable parallels between Donald Trump’s campaign and Hitler’s rise to power, especially 1930-33. And while history doesn’t repeat itself, as Mark Twain said, “it sure rhymes.”

I pointed out that Hitler proposed mass deportations, and so did Trump. Hitler promised to make Germany great again, and Trump promised to make America great again. Hitler thought Jews should wear special IDs, and Trump thinks Muslims should enter a special registry.

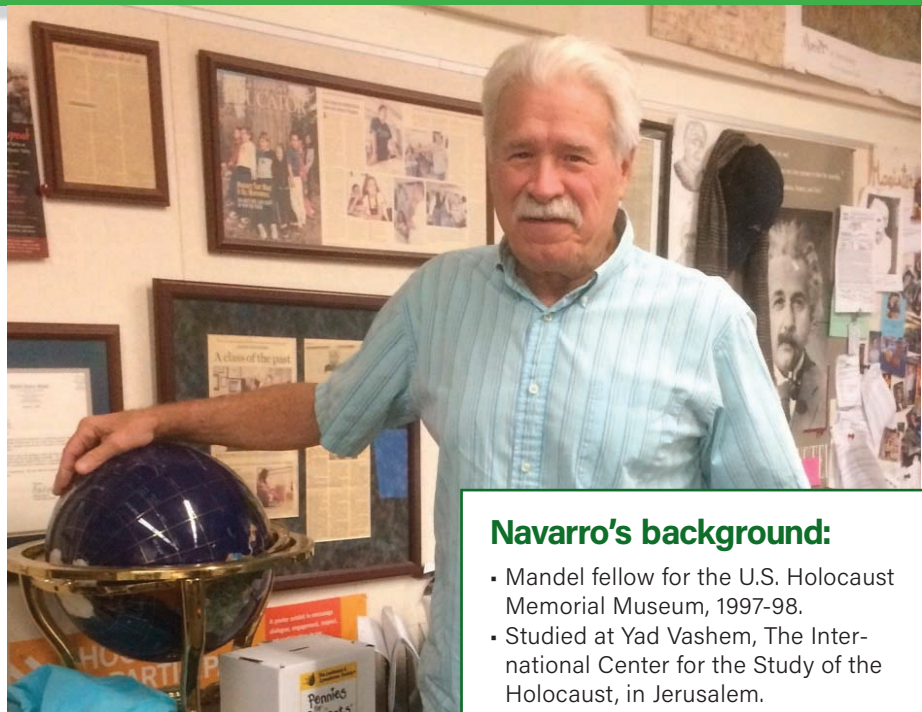
These remarkable parallels are based on straightforward facts. I let students draw their own conclusions.

It’s not unusual for teachers to make historical comparisons. When we study the French Revolution, I give a lecture comparing Napoleon Bonaparte to Adolf Hitler. Recently I compared Hillary Clinton’s run for president to that of Shirley Chisholm, the first African American woman elected to Congress, who ran for president in 1972.

In studying the 2016 election, I simply presented the words of both candidates to my students. We looked at the words of Trump, who publicly called Mexican immigrants “rapists and criminals” and said a judge of Mexican descent could not make an impartial ruling on a court case because he is Mexican. I also presented the words of Hillary Clinton, and we discussed that her making speeches to Wall Street was a problem.

My goal is not to persuade students to feel or think a certain way. My goal is to present accurate facts, engage students in issues of the day, and help them understand how these critical issues affect their lives.

In my class, we have direct and open discussions, and everybody’s views are



Navarro’s background:

- Mandel fellow for the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1997-98.
- Studied at Yad Vashem, The International Center for the Study of the Holocaust, in Jerusalem.
- Taught Facing History, focusing on the Holocaust and universal lessons of this pivotal event, at Mountain View High School for 12 years.

respected. There are no put-downs. A female student of mine shared her opinion: She said Trump couldn’t control his mouth sometimes, but she and her family would support him because they could never vote for Hillary Clinton. It is always good to hear different points of view.

Two of my students, cousins, confided that they worried they could be deported if Trump won. They were scared. I said they were valuable to the American landscape, and there are safeguards in place to protect their rights. I told them we’ll get through this as one people. As Americans we are good people.

One morning, I was told by the principal during my fourth-period class to be in his office at 11:50. The associate superintendent would be there. “You have a right to have a union representative with you,” he told me. He turned and started walking away.

“What is this about?” I asked.

He glanced back and said as he pointed at me with his index finger, “It’s about something you said in class.”

The associate superintendent read an email from a parent whose child reported that I had said Donald Trump is Hitler and hates Muslims, Jews and African Americans. I was not allowed to read the email so I could understand what I was being accused of. During this brief meeting the principal said, "You were directed not to talk about the election," which was untrue. I told him nobody had ever said that to me, and if he did say that I would have taken it up with him immediately. When both administrators implied that something inappropriate had been said by me or had gone on in class, I suggested they get the police involved. They said, "No, it doesn't rise to that level."

At the end of the meeting I told them they were squashing academic freedom and appropriate freedom of speech in the classroom, which is ironically what I teach about when it comes to constitutional rights in this country.

I was removed from class and put on administrative leave. I was to leave the campus right away. I left on Thursday, Nov. 10, during fifth period. Friday was Veterans Day, a holiday, and I would not be back until the following Wednesday. An investigation and interviews would take place with my students on Monday and Tuesday. On Wednesday I would be told of disciplinary measures that would be taken against me.

It was traumatic.

The student newspaper called me up that evening and ran a story in the online edition, which came out the same night I was placed on leave. At about 10 that night, parents began emailing the school to support me. The next morning Facebook lit up in support. Somebody put together a change.org petition, and from what I've heard, more than 40,000 people signed

it. The *San Jose Mercury News* ran a story, and then reporters from everywhere began calling. I have given interviews to media in Los Angeles and New York, and to the BBC.

I received a phone call from the superintendent on Saturday. He asked me to return on Monday morning.

Thanks to the public pressure — and my union, the Mountain View-Los Altos District Teachers Association — I returned to class having only missed an hour of class time. The superintendent apologized privately on behalf of the district. I have still not seen the email, even though I have asked repeatedly to see it and suggested that the name of the student and his parents could be blocked out.

What can be learned from this?

I believe that what happened shows the need for us to communicate more with each other, not less. If I had been allowed to sit down with the parent and principal, we could, at the very least, have come away with a better understanding of each other. It would have been a start of an important conversation. Instead, there was no beginning of communication and no exchange of ideas

at all. An opportunity was missed. As an educator, I find that objectionable.

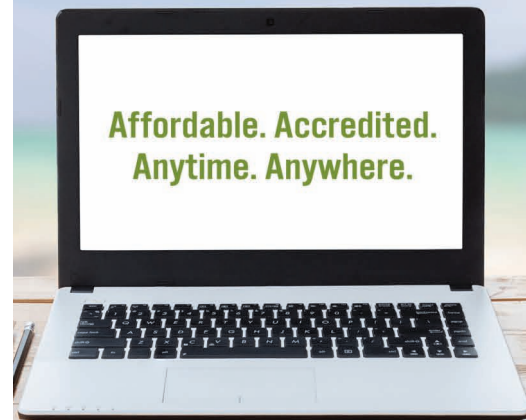
I believe this incident illustrates the need for us to be vigilant and stand together and safeguard our constitutional rights, especially the right to communicate with each other freely. If you take rights away from one person, you are, in a very real sense, taking rights away from all of us as a people. And Americans deserve better than that. ■

Frank Navarro teaches history and special education in Mountain View-Los Altos Union High School District. He is planning to retire at the end of this school year.

"My goal is not to persuade students to feel or think a certain way. My goal is to present accurate facts, engage students in issues of the day, and help them understand how these critical issues affect their lives."

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Natalia Fernandez watches a 3-D printer create a chess piece at the library at Tomas Rivera Middle School in Perris.



RIDING THE WAVE OF INNOVATION

*Educators raise the bar
for students and their profession*

By Sherry Posnick-Goodwin
Photos by Scott Buschman

T **Teachers who rock.
Curriculum that engages.
Classrooms connecting
culture and community.
Project-based learning
that fosters advocacy
and empathy.**

These are all things we looked for as we pulled together our second annual Innovation Issue — and found in our very own membership (no surprise there). The educators we showcase here think outside the box, blaze new trails, and incorporate future trends into present-day practice.

They love what they do, connect with students' ideas and interests, and approach challenges as opportunities needing creative solutions.

LET'S MEET THEM.

CHECK OUT THE LIBRARY

Kory Bootsma

Val Verde Teachers Association

DISTRICT LIBRARIAN

Val Verde Unified School District

*“If a child can’t learn
the way we teach, maybe
we should teach
the way they learn.”*

—Grants administrator
Ignacio Estrada

C

Creative, transformative educators see everything as a teachable moment. They understand that the essence of innovation is looking at what exists, taking a chance, and making it better, often after much trial and error.

In fact, innovative educators know that while success is sweet, missteps and even failure are real possibilities — but are opportunities to learn and improve.

These are lessons they impart to their students, and serve as lessons to us all.



The connected “cubelets” skitter across the table, following the finger of a student leading them like the Pied Piper. They look like toys, but the student isn’t playing. She coded the robotic blocks to follow instructions.

At another table, students play with circuitry, causing bulbs to light up and fashioning remote controls that turn objects into Internet-connected devices. A ball rolls around the room, controlled remotely by a student.

Some huddle around a screen using Tinkercad software to create 3-D digital design objects, while a nearby 3-D printer creates a plastic chess piece that will soon become part of a set.

The library at Tomas Rivera Middle School in Perris buzzes with activity. But students are not asked to shush, because middle school libraries in Val Verde Unified School District serve as Makerspaces, where students enjoy hands-on learning.

“We changed the environment from being quiet and restrictive to something that inspires creativity.”

District librarian Kory Bootsma decided that old-fashioned school libraries were becoming outdated and wanted to change them. With support from the district, school sites, educators and students, she worked to create vital and engaging learning environments that connect with the new state standards, future trends of school libraries, and the district’s desire to increase students’ depth of knowledge of math and science.

“With the Internet, we saw the decline of the libraries as a center of research learning,” says Bootsma. “We wanted to bring school libraries back to the center of learning and research so students can explore, discover and learn. We changed the environment from being quiet and restrictive to something that inspires creativity.”

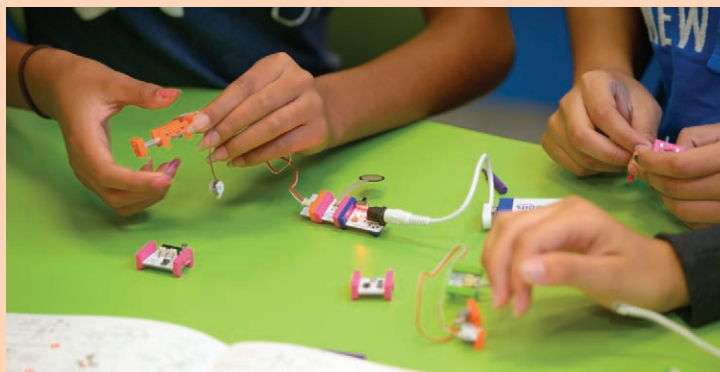
Transforming libraries into active learning centers had a surprising effect: It increased the number of books students check out. Since they spend more time in the library, they notice books that pique their interest.

“Yes, circulation has gone up,” Bootsma says happily, because she wants students to love books.

She also changed the decor of the libraries with brightly colored and unusually shaped furniture that can easily be moved around.

Bootsma embraces change. She was a history teacher, then an agricultural science teacher, and is now a credentialed library media teacher. As for what’s next, she’s not sure.

“People ask me if this is what I want to do for the rest of my life. I say *that* job hasn’t been created yet.”



Top, Priscilla Blackwell-Taylor with robotic “cubelets”; above, Bootsma with Corrina Mendoza and Jonathan Aceves and a Lego techno car.

Opposite page, top, Kory Bootsma holds a circuit board in Tomas Rivera Middle School’s library-cum-Makerspace; at left, Bootsma works with students Carolina Serrano, Katy Rojas and Sophia Sanchez; above, students make circuits.



BOYS TO MEN

Kevin Jennings

Oakland Education Association
MANHOOD DEVELOPMENT
FACILITATOR
Montera Middle School

“I choose to reflect the times and the situations in which I find myself. How can you be an artist and not reflect the times?”

—Nina Simone



“I am ready to be focused and engaged,” the boys recite as class begins. That means sitting up straight, paying attention, listening and participating. It’s “dress for success day,” so they wear shirts and ties.

The Manhood Development class at Montera (and other Oakland campuses) addresses the needs of African American boys, who traditionally have the lowest GPA and graduation rate, and the highest suspension rate. Created in 2010, it is sponsored by Oakland Unified School District’s Office of African American Male Achievement.

The course looks at black history and culture from ancient civilizations to contemporary media. Students study how society’s negative cultural stereotypes and expectations for black males can be devastating to self-image. The goal, of course, is proving that stereotype wrong.

Teacher Kevin Jennings is an excellent role model. A product of Oakland public

schools, he returned to his community to make a difference. He understands challenges his students face growing up in poverty and living in dangerous neighborhoods. Some never had a positive male role model before in their lives.

Prior to teaching, Jennings was a journalist covering the celebrity beat in Los Angeles. Teaching boys how to be men is much more fulfilling, he says with a smile.

“When I was offered an opportunity by my former Spanish teacher at McClymonds High School, I jumped at the opportunity,” says Jennings. “What I love about this job is that I get to see a lot of results daily — and also over time.”

His goal is having them become leaders so they can advocate for themselves. If a student feels something is unfair, he can talk with staff or his peers to resolve it. Students learn self-control and how

to redirect strong emotions that might get them in trouble. They are taught that real men treat women with respect. They are encouraged to serve in school and district leadership committees and share ideas and viewpoints.

It’s more than a class; it’s a brotherhood where students support and encourage each other to make positive choices. As a result, many of their grades in other classes have improved.

“I like this class a lot,” says Rahsaan Smith. “I can be myself and feel comfortable having a teacher the same race as me. He’s a role model. He sets a standard for African American males in Oakland by teaching us values and responsibility. You don’t have to be famous like Malcolm X or Martin Luther King to make a difference. Mr. Kevin is making a difference right here.”

“What I love about this job is that I get to see a lot of results daily — and also over time.”



At left, Kevin Jennings speaks with Ahmad Mixon, and above, conducts Manhood Development class at Montera Middle School.



The class is both rigorous and a "brotherhood." Above, Terry Phillips reads; below, Mahda Fallay helps Dwayne Pittman with his tie.



Got a Good Idea?

Institute for Teaching funds educator innovation

Several of the innovators featured in this section are recipients of grants from **CTA's Institute for Teaching (IFT)**, which annually funds innovative, strength-based projects developed by educators and CTA members.

Almost four dozen members received grants for their ideas this year; 28 Impact Grants (up to \$20,000) and 19 Educator Grants (up to \$5,000) were awarded. Since the program began in 2010, almost \$2.3 million in grants has been disbursed. Project subject matter ranged from STEM/robotics and health and fitness to environmental education and literacy.

The deadline for the next round of grant applications is April 30, 2017. All active, dues-paying members of CTA, including pre-K-12 teachers, certificated support staff, ESP members and college instructors, are eligible to apply. The selection committee looks for projects that improve student achievement, address the needs of diverse or at-risk students, and have multiple partners/stakeholders, along with applicants who can manage the project and share learnings with colleagues. Check out project summaries and application materials at teacherdrivenchange.org.

Want to see innovation in action — and get help with your idea? Join the **Teacher Innovation Expo** prior to CTA's Good Teaching Conference South on Friday, March 17, at the Hyatt Regency Orange County. Hear successful IFT grant recipients discuss their projects, and get insights into the IFT grant-writing and selection process as well as one-on-one support on grant applications. Call IFT at 619-683-3990 for more information.



THE ART OF ADVOCACY

Dan Reynolds

Mount Diablo Education Association

ENGLISH/CIVIL RIGHTS
TEACHER

Mt. Diablo High School

“I want to stay as close to the edge as I can without going over. Out on the edge you see all kinds of things you can’t see from the center.”

—Kurt Vonnegut Jr., in *Player Piano*

Dan Reynolds has advocated for human rights throughout his 16-year teaching career. He serves as the chair for CTA’s Civil Rights Committee and authored CTA’s policy for dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline.

He also created a human rights education course from scratch that recently became “a-g” certified (meeting UC admission requirements) and is taught at several schools in Mount Diablo Unified School District.

Most people are familiar with the Bill of Rights — the first 10 amendments to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing personal freedoms. Fewer are familiar with the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights created in 1948, which states the rights and freedoms to which every human is equally and inalienably entitled. This document, focusing on cultural, political, civil, economic and social rights regardless of country or social group, serves as a foundation in the class.

“Once we study that, the kids take off,” says Reynolds. “Then we look at



“It’s my duty to use my privilege to help important human rights causes move forward. I encourage others to do the same.”

Dan Reynolds has been a tireless — and effective — advocate for human rights in his classroom and district, and also in his CTA work.

contemporary human rights issues around the world. A few years ago, we studied the Occupy movement and how it was spreading worldwide. More recently, we have looked at the Movement for Black Lives.”

The Vonnegut quote that inspires Reynolds reminds him that it’s important to spend time “on the edge.”

“It reminds me of Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development [commonly known as scaffolding] and the idea that a life spent on the edge is a life spent spiraling outward to expand our experiences and expand our zone.”

The recipient of the National Council of Teachers of English 2016 Affiliate Intellectual Freedom Award has worked hard to expand the list of board-approved texts in his district, including *Fight Club* and *Maus*.

His students successfully lobbied the school district to stop using Hershey’s chocolate in on-site baking and replace it with Fair Trade Certified chocolate, so child workers are not exploited and adult workers are treated fairly. He recently worked with his district to develop more inclusive policies for transgender students.

“Lots of things were handed to me simply because of my privilege as a white, college-educated, male heterosexual,” says Reynolds. “I see it as my duty to use that privilege to help important human rights causes move forward, and I encourage others to do the same.”

Since this story was written, Dan Reynolds accepted a position with CTA and will continue his advocacy work.

MAKING THE PROFESSION STRONG

Al Rabanera

Fullerton Secondary Teachers Organization

MATH TEACHER

La Vista Continuation High School

“Learning never exhausts the mind.”

—Leonardo da Vinci

Lots of people talk about ways to solve the teaching shortage. Al Rabanera does more: He actively helps develop and implement new programs to recruit young people into the teaching ranks.

Rabanera heads a team of teacher leaders, administrators and Student CTA members in the “Cultivating Teacher Leaders: A Progressive Approach to Growing and Diversifying the Teaching Profession in California” project. Part of the Instructional Leadership Corps, a partnership between CTA and Stanford University that fosters teacher-driven professional development, the team has created programs to mitigate the shortage and diversify the profession. Among them:

- A prevention/intervention program to pilot in Fullerton, encouraging at-risk teens to become teachers by providing social-emotional supports and academic skill building.
- A high school mentorship program, which piloted this year in Anaheim and Tustin schools, offering educationally themed workshops that encourage students to enroll in college teacher prep programs.
- A mentorship program piloted last



“I want to bring respect back to our profession. I want teachers to take back the profession.”



Al Rabanera works to grow and diversify California teaching ranks; at left, Rabanera with student Vincente Castillo.

year at CSU Fullerton pairing college students with mentor teachers, in hopes that participants will enter teacher preparation programs.

- A teacher induction program, currently under development, where beginning teachers will be teamed with mentor teachers to offer feedback and support.
- Professional development workshops offered twice yearly in Southern California, which serve as a recruiting ground for teacher mentors.

Rabanera and his team face big challenges. California reportedly needed to hire 22,000 additional teachers in 2016-17 alone. According to a recent Learning Policy Institute survey, 20 to 40 percent of teachers leave the profession in the first five years (higher in schools that serve low-income and minority students). Meanwhile, the training pipeline is dwindling, decreasing 75 percent over the last 10 years.

This past fall, Rabanera received an NEA Great Public Schools Fund Grant of \$250,000 to continue to develop the programs; \$100,000 of the total is earmarked for student scholarships for the high school and college/university mentorship programs.

Rabanera's innovative ways extend to his own teaching. He draws from a broad array of instructional strategies, ranging from Google apps for education to individual handheld responders to online-based programs that help students visualize mathematics, for example. He is one of five educators to receive the NEA Foundation's Horace Mann Award for Teaching Excellence, based on creative implementation of technology in the classroom.

“Teaching doesn't get the respect it deserves,” observes Rabanera. “I want to bring respect back to our profession. I want teachers to take back the profession. It's all about networking so we can grow and move forward.”



CULTIVATING CROPS OF STUDENTS

Bonnie Magill

Marysville Unified Teachers Association

AGRICULTURE TEACHER
Marysville High School

“Many hands make light work.”

—Writer/poet John Heywood



Myshellia Willis, Mauricio Herrejon and Araceli Solano show off potted geraniums; Bonnie Magill with the class bunny; Jaylynn Anderson with AgLit.

AgLit is the name of a large, always-hungry gilt (soon to be mama sow) residing at Marysville High School. AgLit is also the abbreviation for the school's Agricultural Literacy program in this rural town.

Funded by a grant from CTA's Institute for Teaching, AgLit uses high school students belonging to Future Farmers of America (FFA) to teach K-8 students in the Marysville Joint Unified School District about crops and critters, including AgLit. Teens create their own lessons incorporating the new standards in science, math, language arts and social studies. The program was created by agriculture teacher Bonnie Magill.

Magill, who has cultivated crops of ag students for 30 years, says AgLit “makes students aware of where their food and fiber comes from, so that they can make informed choices and be aware of the agriculture industry and our natural resources.”

For a recent visit by elementary students, Magill's students created classroom stations with mini-lessons about plant propagation, the difference between herbivores and carnivores, and how animal traits change from birth to maturity. Then came the best part: going to the barnyard to see the animals.

The youngsters learned that Eli, the department's miniature horse, has eyes on the sides of his head rather than in front because he is a prey animal. This allows him to see predators approaching him while grazing.

“My students recently created a unit on genetics,” says Magill proudly. “It's easy to teach traits and heritability by showing [younger] students a variety of chickens or bunnies with different colors or floppy ears.”

Teens say they have gained confidence and public speaking skills from teaching youngsters at schools and from presenting with Magill at CTA's





Above, Rachel Aguilar works with Alexi McCartney, Taylor Carroll and Alani Renteria-Solano on a "food chain" lesson; below, Magill waters plants in the shade house.

"Whether they pursue an agriculture career or not, they understand the industry's importance."

Good Teaching Conference in San Jose. Some say the experience has prompted them to consider teaching as a profession.

"I love it," says junior Jaylynn Anderson. "The kids send us letters and drawings about how much they enjoy us coming into their classroom. It is so cool to see their faces light up with excitement."

Magill, who oversees the FFA chapter, recently received the Honorary American FFA Degree at the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, bestowed upon FFA advisers and supporters who are outstanding in their field.

"I love exposing students to new things," says Magill. "Whether they pursue an agriculture career or not, they understand the industry's importance."



Innovation on a Bigger Scale

Federal program funds local and broader initiatives

The U.S. Department of Education recently announced the winners of its 2016 Investing in Innovation (i3) competition, including four California-based grantees:

- The Fresno County Office of Education will receive \$12 million over five years to foster students' college-readiness by expanding a successful high school expository reading and writing course for students in California and Washington.
- The Riverside County Office of Education will receive \$3 million over five years to foster students' college-readiness by developing a fourth-year high school math course focused on flexibility, transferability and critical reasoning.
- The Santa Ana Unified School District will receive \$3 million over three years to enhance a positive school climate by developing interventions and supports, and expanding restorative practices.
- The National Writing Project, based in Berkeley, will receive \$20 million over five years to scale up its College-Ready Writers Program, working with 46 high-need rural partner local educational agencies in 16 states, including California, for students in grades 4-10.

This is the final year of the i3 program, which was first created as part of the 2009 stimulus package. The Every Student Succeeds Act replaces i3 with a new Education Innovation and Research competition. The new program includes three tiers of grants (early-phase, mid-phase and expansion) and will provide support for rigorously evaluated local and state initiatives. Applications are due April 13, 2017. See innovation.ed.gov for details.



TEACHING LIFE SKILLS

Theresa Bradley and Crystal Standley
Twin Rivers United Educators
SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS
Foothill Ranch Middle School

“Innovation only survives when people believe in their own ideas.”

—Innovation expert Debra Kaye

“Let’s knock three times,” Theresa Bradley tells students. They count “1, 2, 3” on the classroom door.

“Let’s stand back so we don’t get hit by the door when it opens,” suggests Bradley, and they back away.

The door swings open without hitting anyone, which is a good thing because students carry trays laden with soup and bread, delivering them to hungry staff at Foothill Ranch Middle in Sacramento.

The students in grades 5-8 have moderate to severe disabilities. They deliver homemade soup, bread and inspiration every week. It’s fun, and it’s also a great learning experience.

For example, if a meal costs \$6, and a teacher hands them a \$10 bill, they count on their fingers to determine how much change to give back. They learn to recognize numbers on classroom doors. They practice smiling, shaking hands



Clockwise from top: Victor Salcedo and Yorday Leon Gunn deliver bread to Lisa Gant, with help from Theresa Bradley; Alondra Lopez with Crystal Standley; Bradley and Standley.

and saying “thank you” to customers.

The classroom of Bradley and co-teacher Crystal Standley was previously used by a home economics class. With a stove, fridge and washer/dryer, it’s ideal for students with special needs to learn about daily living.

Bradley and Standley, who teamed up to teach four years ago, take students on community walking trips and public buses so they can learn how to get around on their own. The student recycling program raised more than

\$700 last year. There’s also the Coffee and More business, where students prepare and sell hot beverages and bagels in the morning.

“Our students are learning to work as a team here,” says Standley. “They learn cooking skills, money skills and customer service skills. Any of these students could easily work at McDonald’s or Taco Bell. They are only in middle school, but most of them are employable when they leave us.”

“They are only in middle school, but most of them are employable when they leave us.”

FULL STEAM AHEAD

Rosa RiVera Furumoto

California Faculty Association
PROFESSOR OF CHICANA/
CHICANO STUDIES
CSU Northridge

*“We make the road
by walking.”*

—Brazilian educator/activist
Paulo Freire

Question: What do you get when you mix Native American folklore, Latino heritage, concerns about global warming, and modern-day STEM science?

Answer: Lessons that are theatrical, culturally relevant, integrated with Next Generation Science Standards, and fun for the whole family.

Welcome to the Good Heart Chicana/o and Native Science Project, designed to inspire low-income Latino and Native American students to become interested in STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math) through exploration of climate change.

Created last year by CSU Northridge professor Rosa RiVera Furumoto, together with community partner Parent Pioneers/Padres Pioneros, this unique after-school program at three schools in Los Angeles Unified School District is funded by a grant from CTA's Institute for Teaching. CSU Northridge students enrolled in the teacher credential program help to create the curriculum for third-grade participants.

“CSUN students get almost no opportunity in their teacher training to work with diverse families,” RiVera Furumoto says. “So this is a very cool experience for them.”

Parents and grandparents brought



“Our mission is to awaken the realization in children that they have the capacity to address climate change and make a difference.”



Rosa RiVera Furumoto, top, inspires students to become interested in STEAM by involving families; at left, third-graders Jaylynn and Jaydyn Garcia work with their grandmother Christina Cardenas.

as becoming scientists, engineers, physicists, teachers or astronauts.

enthusiasm and snacks when they joined their third-graders for an after-school session at San Fernando Elementary School recently. They also brought costumes to perform a Native American folktale, “How Grandmother Spider Stole the Sun,” which tells of the origin of sunlight. The performance in Spanish was at times hilarious.

That set the stage for college students to initiate a discussion on alternative energy and the problems of global warming caused by fossil fuels. The youngsters had lots of ideas about ways to save energy including car-pooling, riding bikes, turning out lights and recycling.

It was a natural segue to information about career opportunities such

College students shared a story about John Herrington, the first Native American astronaut to walk in space. Students of color need role models, says RiVera Furumoto, to convey the importance of science.

How can energy from the sun create electricity?

This question launched the culminating activity, with students taking small solar panels outside to soak up sunshine and provide the energy needed to make small propellers spin.

“Our mission is to awaken the realization in children that they have the capacity to address climate change and make a difference in the world,” says RiVera Furumoto. “I’m proud to be part of that.”



Our ongoing “Hungry Students” series looks at what’s being done, and what needs to be done, to address an increasingly urgent issue. We invite your ideas and feedback; email editor@cta.org.

Solutions to rising food insecurity among college students

By Dina Martin
Photos by Scott Buschman

Hunger on Campus

*Around a quarter of California children experience food insecurity, and a similar proportion of college students are going hungry as well. According to a 2015 national report by No Kid Hungry, educators who regularly see students come to school hungry describe multiple problems among them, such as inability to concentrate, lack of energy and motivation, poor academic performance, tiredness, and behavioral problems. **What is being done?***



Opposite page and left: Students at College of the Sequoias' farmers' market and food pantry.



In December, the California Faculty Association chapter at Stanislaus State University made a \$35,000 donation to keep a food pantry open for students.

Thanks to work by faculty and staff, students at Humboldt State University can sign up for CalFresh, shop for fresh produce, and obtain a hot bowl of soup for free — all on campus.

Faculty and staff on the equity committee at Taft College used state student equity funds to hire student workers for a new food and clothing resource center on campus.

An effort at College of the Sequoias supported by faculty, staff and students resulted in a robust on-campus program featuring snack stations, a farmers' market and a food pantry, all free for students.

With the rising number of “food insecure” college students, faculty in California’s community colleges and CSU campuses are becoming more involved in caring for their students’ basic needs.

“It boils down to the fact that we’re teachers and we care about our students and their ability to learn,” says Steven Filling, professor of accounting and president of the CSU Stanislaus chapter of the California Faculty Association (CFA). “It’s an urgent need, and this is our community stepping up to participate in addressing the challenges our students face.”

A study, “Serving Displaced and Food Insecure Students in the CSU,” commissioned by the CSU Chancellor’s Office and issued in January 2016, reports survey data estimating that 21 percent of students are food insecure — though many faculty say that figure is as high as 50 percent in their areas. (The survey also estimates that 8.7 percent of students are homeless.)

A 2015 survey of 4,000 students at 10 colleges nationwide suggests that more than half of all community college students struggle with food insecurity. While there are no hard figures on hunger’s impact on student matriculation, health experts point out that it not only affects a student’s ability to concentrate in class, but often forces them to make decisions about completing their degrees.

“When faced with the real threat of hunger or homelessness, their focus is survival before success,” says Luke Wood, co-director of the Community College Equity Assessment Lab (CCEAL) at San Diego State University, which issued a

report, “Struggling to Survive — Striving to Succeed: Food and Housing Insecurities in the Community College,” in December.

The issue goes way beyond the starving student stereotype. Although previous generations relied on ramen or boxed mac and cheese to make it through college, many of today’s students are older, first-generation, lower-income students of color who are pursuing their degrees while supporting families, working one or two jobs, and paying down loans.

Destigmatizing the problem

There is also concern on campus that things may get worse under President Donald Trump’s administration, which may cut the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), known in California as CalFresh.

“Our students have very complicated lives,” says Filling’s colleague Ann Strahm, associate professor of sociology at CSU Stanislaus. “Over 60 percent of them are on Pell Grants, which means students are poor.”

Strahm discovered that first-generation students are not always likely to come forward to get help, even when she notices they seem shaky, clammy and distracted. She finds ways to bring leftovers from faculty lunches to her classroom, or she may “invite” a student to join her in eating granola bars, which she keeps stocked in her desk.



Syndee Wood

Faculty and staff at MiraCosta College in San Diego County have responded to the hunger crisis on campus through a



What Is Food Insecurity?

Food insecurity is defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as a “state of being without reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food.”

Estimates on just how many college students are food insecure vary depending on the location of the college and the socio-economic level of the students.

A CSU study, “Serving Displaced and Food Insecure Students in the CSU,” reports survey data estimating 21 percent of students are food insecure. The survey asked students to respond to statements such as “I worry whether my food will run out before I get money to buy more” and “I am often hungry but don’t eat because I can’t afford enough food.”

Other recent surveys report upward of 50 percent of college students (nationwide and at the undergraduate level at UC campuses) experience food insecurity.



Cynthia Norvall, Samantha McDonald and Pat Alvarez in the food pantry at College of the Sequoias.

variety of ways, from payroll deductions to contributing to the annual “Scare Away Hunger” food drive in October. The campus has tried to destigmatize hunger by incorporating efforts into its system, hiring work-study student advocates to spread the word, and awarding service learning credit to students for conducting research. Eight years ago, when the campus food pantry opened, 25 students used the service. This semester, the pantry provides a simple bag lunch to 900 students, according to Beatriz Palmer, student services coordinator.

MiraCosta English instructor Syndee Wood works to destigmatize hunger on campus by asking students to write about the relationship between poverty and illiteracy in her critical thinking classes. Wood is especially passionate about the cause, having experienced hunger herself as a grocery clerk out on strike.

“I’ve been one of those people who benefits from a food drive,” recalls Wood, MiraCosta College Academic Associate Faculty. “I’ve been the person who was handed a bag of groceries. It was three days before Christmas, and I had gone two months without a paycheck. It was ugly.”

She adds, “It is shocking that 30 percent of college students are hungry. I don’t care if we ever require proof [to receive services]. We should be rewarding them for coming forward.”

Student-led successes

Samantha McDonald, a work-study student at College of the Sequoias (COS) in Visalia, assists students at the campus food pantry in the Student Health Center.

“It’s a little depressing to see how many students need it to help feed their families,” she says.

McDonald also makes use of the food pantry, snack stations and monthly farmers’ market, all of which are free to students.

“I usually get two bags of groceries a month from the pantry. It’s humbled me a bit, but at the same time, I know it’s a program to help people, and no one should feel bad about needing help,” she says.

As many as 400 students and community members have used the farmers’ market in a single morning, says Pat Alvarez, faculty coordinator of student health services, who also researches



the health needs of students. FoodLink for Tulare County provides fresh produce gleaned from local fields for free. One recent market featured pears, persimmons and potatoes, and had a nurse educator who conducted a cooking demonstration on how to make pancakes with persimmon sauce.

Alvarez, College of the Sequoias Teachers Association, developed several programs to serve COS students, working with student services nurse Cynthia Norvall, as well as faculty. She notes a campus survey found more than 50 percent of students worry about food.

“Right now, we have students who can’t buy books because they need to feed their family,” she says.

Students brought attention to the issue after meeting with Michael Pollan and other food activists at a Bioneers Conference in 2013. Students in the Sustainability Club returned to campus to start a demonstration program where they fed the entire campus a free, organic, locally sourced, locally prepared lunch on several occasions, according to Paul Tidwell, faculty adviser to the club and COSTA president.

Students Sarah Estrada, Kate Hunt and Matthew Scott at College of the Sequoias’ monthly farmers’ market.



Sonya Navarro

“Living so far away from home, it’s been a struggle to pay rent and eat sometimes.”

—Sonya Navarro, Student CTA Executive Board

Story continues on page 36. 



Clockwise from top: Food distribution near Encina Preparatory High School; ghost peppers from Finney Organic Garden; helping hands get Finney garden in shape.

Beyond Breakfast

K-12 schools, educators work to provide food — and more

K-12 schools deal with student hunger by serving breakfast and lunch, hosting food pantries, partnering with food banks for on-campus distribution, and conducting food drives. A few educators, schools, districts and communities go beyond.

Sacramento: Barry Roth, San Juan Teachers Association, oversees two monthly food distributions at Encina Preparatory High School. “The need is that great,” he says. Roth, Encina’s Community Partnerships Coordinator and English teacher, points out that some 95 percent of students at the school are classified as low socioeconomic status; nearly 40 percent are homeless. In addition, 14 percent are refugees, over 34 percent are learning English as a second language, and the school’s mobility rate trends above 75 percent.

To meet these challenges, Roth has created a clothes closet, established a close relationship with a local clinic, and facilitated other support functions. The school works closely with Sacramento Food Bank and Family Services.

“The beautiful thing is that our staff has been carefully chosen and knows that the first order of business is to care and love our students, while at the same time offering a rigorous curriculum,” says Roth.

Vallejo: Produce from Finney Organic Garden, run by social science teacher Christopher Verreos at John Finney High School, is delivered each week to a local food bank and a local community outreach ministry, which uses it in the hot meals served to those in need. The garden was started two years ago when Verreos stepped up to help revitalize and better utilize a rear area at the tiny continuation school.

The garden has blossomed with hands-on work by students in Verreos’ weekly after-school class, called *The Change*. “The Change focuses on three aspects of student experience,” says Verreos, Vallejo Education Association (VEA). “Personal academic success skill development, school site improvements, and community service — mostly via the garden.”

The garden also gets a hand from Verreos’ colleagues, Finney’s operations budget, donations from local businesses, and grants from VEA and county agencies, which have certified garden produce for school lunches.

The district and community have been enthusiastic supporters. The local ministry gave a generous scholarship to a college-bound Finney student, and underwrites the cost of Grad Nite for a few who can’t afford it. In December, a district official visited along with business and community leaders, who offered to install a timed drip-irrigation system that will double garden capacity while conserving water.

Anaheim: All nine schools in Magnolia School District partner with YMCA-Anaheim Achieves for their after-school programs — which include a snack and warm dinner. Families pay a dollar a day for their students, who also receive academic enrichment, recreational activities and homework assistance. Two of the schools host food pantries once a month, and the district also participates in a free breakfast/lunch program during the summer.

For the most vulnerable families, Magnolia and other districts work with Orange County nonprofit Giving Children Hope to send students home with backpacks of food on weekends and during school breaks. Giving Children Hope also distributes personal and household goods, along with holiday gifts for children.

? *How does your school handle student hunger? Let us know at editor@cta.org.*



Above left, Taft College history professor Jennifer Altenhofel flanked by student workers Alexandra Benevidez and Christian Hoffman in the campus's new food pantry. Taft used state Student Equity Funds to open its food and clothing resource center.

At the time, Tidwell says, there was not much support from the administration. “But these students got the discussion started, got the committees formed, made contact with community organizations, and paved the way for [Alvarez’s] ultimate success.”

Short-term solutions?

Perhaps one of the strongest and most extensive hunger assistance programs is at Humboldt State University (HSU), where a student-driven initiative aims to provide fellow students with basic necessities and connections to community resources. A partnership between the HSU Department of Social Work and HSU Health Education, the Oh SNAP! program offers a food pantry, a campus farm stand, assistance with CalFresh, cooking classes, and a shuttle to downtown Arcata grocery stores, and works with campus dining to provide food items that have not been consumed.

Students can even download an app to find out when and where fresh produce and perishable items are available to them. The program also offers ways for students to become involved in advocacy and gain academic credit for research projects.

Last year, 8,000 students took advantage of the services, according to Mira Friedman, HSU health educator with Oh SNAP!

One of those students is Sonya Navarro, an education major

who also serves on the Student CTA Executive Board. Navarro works 15 hours a week for Oh SNAP! and regularly uses the food pantry, where she is allowed to pick up seven items at a time.

“I attended Santa Monica College and UC Santa Barbara before coming here, and we certainly didn’t have anything like this there,” Navarro says. “Living so far away from home, it’s been a struggle to pay rent and eat sometimes.”

On the heels of the CSU study, Gov. Brown in September signed AB 1747, the College Student Hunger Relief Act of 2016, by Assembly Member Shirley Weber (D-San Diego), requiring that California higher education institutions apply to participate in local food assistance programs. It also establishes funding accounts for college food pantries as part of the state’s Emergency Food Assistance Program.

While responses to food insecurity by both CSU and local community colleges are commendable and substantial, faculty worry about what the future has in store for their students.

“I think food pantries are short-term responses, and I have a fear they may become long-term solutions,” says Jennifer Maguire, HSU assistant professor of social work and CFA member, who helped implement the Oh SNAP! program. “I worry that we will depend on them rather than deal with the real problems.”



Jennifer Maguire



Mission Oak High School students Wendy Lopez and Jonathan Velasquez.



High school educators Leonard Houser, left, and Dave Terrel are active with Harvesting Hope.

Students Pitch In for Hunger

Harvesting Hope project brings Tulare County's bounty to those who need it

By **Dina Martin** Photos by **Scott Buschman**

The Central Valley's bountiful fields and orchards are ripe for the picking, and no one knows that better than students in Tulare, who regularly spend their weekends harvesting thousands of pounds of excess produce for their local food bank.

One of those students is Jonathan Velasquez, a senior at Mission Oak High School and son of a farmworker. "It feels good knowing I'm helping people out," he says. "My dad picked fruit, and he used to say he would never want me to do it. Now that I am doing it, I see how hard it is."

Velasquez has given up numerous Saturdays to gather produce from local orchards, backyard gardens and fields as part of his school's Harvesting Hope project. The project has become so popular, it has expanded

from Mission Oak to high schools, middle schools and elementary schools throughout the Tulare area. Along the way, students have not only become more aware of poverty and hunger in their county, they are doing something substantial to make a difference.

"After a harvest, I always feel proud of myself," says Madisen Krohn, a sophomore at Tulare Western High School. "I feel good that fresh food is going to a family."

Although the Central Valley has been called the "salad bowl" of the nation, many of its own residents are not able to afford the fresh produce that is exported to other states. Depending on which study you look at, food insecurity affects from 29 to 37 percent of the households in the county, while

the poverty rate is over 20 percent. That food insecurity has resulted in a dramatic increase in obesity rates and diabetes, since food insecure families are forced to rely on cheaper diets of processed carbohydrates.

After the death of several relatives to diabetes, Pixley native Sarah Ramirez undertook to obtain advanced degrees in public health epidemiology and public health policy and history to help her community. Together, she and her husband Dave Terrel, then a math teacher at Tulare Union High School, formed Be Healthy Tulare, a grassroots effort to create a healthier quality of life in the county. Through Be Healthy Tulare, the two launched a gleaning and harvest project in 2012 to collect and redistribute unpicked fruit.

Terrel began enlisting students from his Algebra II class and the football team to join community volunteers in the weekend project.

"We realized this was a public service on both sides," Terrel says. "Many elderly people could no longer pick their fruit or eat it because it interfered with their medications. On the other end, we





were giving people fruit who couldn't afford to buy it."

The program expanded even further under Mission Oak High School history teacher Michaelpaul Mendoza, who in 2014 tasked students in his cultural history class with developing a student service-learning project. The students chose to team up with Be Healthy Tulare's gleaning project and established Harvesting Hope as a school-based campaign.



Mission Oak's Michaelpaul Mendoza explains how Harvesting Hope remains a student-driven project.

“There’s an intimacy in picking fruit. There is no more direct way to contribute than helping people in hunger.”

—Leonard Houser,
Tulare JUHSDTA

“Michaelpaul became the Pied Piper, pushing for schoolwide involvement,” says Terrel, who is now athletics director but remains a booster. “Now there are 16 high schools and middle schools involved.”

While there are other gleaning projects in operation around the state, Mendoza says, Harvesting Hope is the only student-driven program.

“The big reason I became a teacher is because I know the potential our youth have. Our students are an overlooked resource,” says Mendoza, Tulare Joint Union High School District Teachers Association (Tulare JUHSDTA).

Over 20 to 30 weekends throughout the year, as many as 300 students sign up online to pick kiwis, pomegranates, oranges, blueberries, tangerines and corn around Tulare and nearby Porterville, Exeter and Visalia. Even with little experience, the teenagers may glean 15,000 pounds of produce in a single day.

Local businesses have contributed to the effort by donating equipment and water, while the local FoodLink food bank and Tulare County Area Transit often arrange free transportation for students to the harvesting sites. Other campus groups have contributed to the campaign as well. At Mission Oak, for example, the Future Farmers of America planted three acres of sweet corn to add to the harvest. Terrel makes use of his Class A driver's license to haul the produce from field to food bank in his truck.

For some, like Mendoza, the gleaning project has turned into a family affair.

“I have a 5-year-old and 10-year-old who get to see fruit and where it comes from,” he says. “My dad and uncle were both farmworkers. They have become our most dedicated volunteers, now that they are picking fruit for a totally different reason. It’s bringing generations together.”

Across town at Tulare Western High School, science teacher Leonard Houser has brought his students into the harvesting fold as well. He points out that the program has garnered several awards, and



Sarah Ramirez is executive director of FoodLink, which provides food and nutrition education.

the students even received a standing ovation on the floor of the state Senate.

But the major reward of the program has really been the impact on the students themselves.

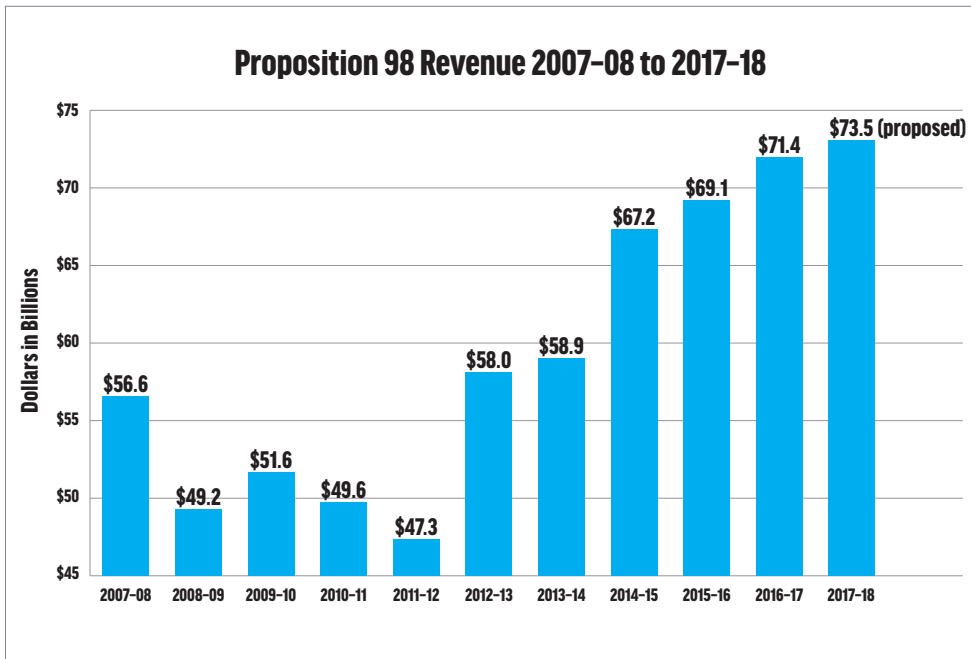
“There’s an intimacy in picking fruit,” says Houser, also a Tulare JUHSDTA member. “There is no more direct way to contribute than helping people in hunger.”

Houser and Terrel note that the project has forged a camaraderie among students at rival schools who sport their own Harvesting Hope school T-shirts. Perhaps just as important, it’s also raised awareness of and empathy for their many fellow students who are food insecure themselves.

“It absolutely has made kids more aware,” says Ben Cooper, Tulare City Teachers Association, a third-grade teacher at Alpine Vista Elementary School, who even takes his own young children along on harvests. “We have students who come every single time. “They know they are giving back when they give to FoodLink.”

For Sarah Ramirez, who is now executive director of FoodLink, the school-based Harvesting Hope project is one of many programs that include food collection and distribution, nutritional cooking classes, lunch programs, and community gardens. But it looms large in bringing people together to improve the health of the community, especially the students.

“I know this project has made a difference in their lives,” she says. ■



**Proposition 98 Revenue
2007-08 to 2017-18**

Prop. 98 guarantees a minimum level of funding to be spent on K-14 education. Gov. Brown's 2017-18 budget plan pegs the Prop. 98 funding level at \$73.5 billion.

Legislative Update

Proposed State Budget Includes Rise in Education Spending

GOV. JERRY BROWN presented the first draft of the state's 2017-18 budget in January. The proposed \$177.1 billion budget includes \$122.5 billion in the general fund. Because of declining state revenues, Brown predicts California will face a \$1.6 billion deficit as soon as next summer if it does not temper spending.

His budget raises education spending for California's public schools and community colleges to \$73.5 billion, from \$71.4 billion in the current fiscal year.

Under Proposition 98, passed in 1988 (see chart), \$73.5 billion is the minimum amount guaranteed to be spent on education. The state's revenue woes lowered the 2016-17 minimum guarantee under the Prop. 98 funding formula, meaning the amount approved by the Legislature in June for K-12 schools and community colleges dropped by \$500 million.

"There is a lot at stake at this very moment, and the uncertainty we're facing with the incoming federal administration is causing a lot of angst among educators and in our communities," says CTA President Eric Heins. "That's why we are cautiously looking at all the information that was presented to us in Gov. Brown's state budget proposal."

Other educational highlights of Brown's proposed budget:

- Local Control Funding Formula, which provides extra money for students with high needs, including low-income students and English

learners: Funding increases by \$744 million over 2016-17 levels, a minor increase from the current year that keeps the LCFF funding target at 96 percent (full funding is expected in 2020-21).

- Proposition 30 revenue: The budget reflects the final year of revenue from the quarter cent state sales tax increase effected by Prop. 30, passed in 2012. Prop. 30 also raised income tax on the wealthiest Californians; that revenue will continue for two more years, and will then be maintained for 12 additional years, thanks to Prop. 55, passed in November.
- Per-pupil spending under Prop. 98 will reach about \$10,900, up from about \$10,600 in the current budget year.

Brown noted that if the Affordable Care Act is repealed, it would jeopardize \$16 billion in federal Medicaid health care subsidies for 4 million Californians and have a significant impact on future budgets.

Brown will present a revised proposal in May.

For the proposed budget's impact on higher education, see page 40.

Proposed Budget: Higher Education

Gov. Brown's proposed 2017-18 budget allocates \$14.6 billion for higher education, including financial aid. The University of California system receives an increase of \$83 million, or 2.5 percent; the California State University system receives an increase of \$185 million, or 5.3 percent. Community colleges receive an increase of \$121 million.

The California Faculty Association found the budget wanting. "[We're] disappointed that Gov. Jerry Brown once again has failed to fully invest in the California State University, and in doing so, ignored the CSU Board of Trustees' request of a \$343.7 million increase in state funding for the CSU system this fiscal year," said CFA President Jennifer Eagan in a statement. "This is funding that is critical to delivering quality education to our nearly half-million students attending 'The People's University.'"

Eagan continued: "Not only are our students now facing the lack of investment from the state, but also could be facing proposed tuition hikes due to lack of state funding. This shortfall shouldn't be balanced on the backs of our students, many of whom are low-income, the first in their families to attend college, and increasingly are students of color."

Both UC and CSU asked for more funding, and plan modest tuition increases this coming fall.

Brown's budget also came under criticism for phasing out a 3-year-old program providing middle-class scholarships to UC and CSU students. The budget renews scholarships for 37,000 current recipients but offers no new assistance after that.

"We must work to keep college affordable for California students," said Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon (D-Paramount). "I will not support burdening them with higher fees and greater student debt."

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

New Law Gives Veterans-Turned-Educators Additional Sick Time

CTA-supported Senate Bill 1180, by state Sen. Hannah-Beth Jackson (D-Santa Barbara), was signed into law by Gov. Brown in September. It helps disabled military veterans who are newly hired in public schools by giving them additional sick leave of up to 10 days for certificated, and up to 12 days for classified, employees in their first year of employment.

Disabled veterans who become school employees on or after Jan. 1, 2017, are eligible. The sick leaves are for the purpose of undergoing medical treatment for illness or injury related to military service.

Teachers See the Possibilities

In Jennifer Swanson's high school English class, seniors master material that prepares them for college and careers, gaining writing and communication skills to benefit them throughout their lives.



Arroyo High School, Expository English Class, Teacher: Jennifer Swanson '96, M.A.Ed. '99

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ACCOUNTABILITY

State Board of Education Approves the California School Dashboard

On Jan. 11, the State Board of Education (SBE) approved a landmark accountability and improvement system, the California School Dashboard, which will help parents, educators and the public evaluate schools and districts, identify strengths and weaknesses, and provide targeted assistance.

The dashboard, formerly known as the evaluation rubrics, will be unveiled to the public in late February or March. It will be fully operational by the 2017-18 school year.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson notes that the dashboard will be far more useful than the previous Academic Performance Index, which relied on test scores to produce one number for each school.

CTA President Eric Heins agrees. "The California Dashboard represents



With the California School Dashboard, school and district performance will be measured by a number of indicators, and rated using a color-coded scale from Blue to Red.

a groundbreaking new way to assess a school's progress," Heins says. "Any time you look at any child or group, you want to use indicators that are giving you a complete picture."

The SBE approved performance standards for the Academic Indicator, which includes assessments based on California's new standards that are more rigorous than previous assessments, and tools to assist districts in measuring and reporting progress on two local indicators: academic standards implementation and parent engagement.

As with the other indicators, performance will be based on status and how

much schools or districts have improved or declined. Schools will be rated on various factors and assigned color-coded icons representing one of five performance levels: Blue (highest), Green, Yellow, Orange and Red (lowest).

Earlier, the SBE approved performance standards for four state indicators (readiness for college and careers, graduation rates, progress of English learners, and suspension rates) and tools for four local indicators (basic conditions at schools, school climate, coordination of services for foster youth, and coordination of services for expelled youth).

EDUCATION FUNDING

How California Stacks Up

According to *Education Week's* 2017 "Quality Counts" report released in January, California again ranked 46th in per-pupil funding (using 2014 data). Adjusted for regional cost-of-living differences, per-pupil expenditures (PPE) in the state were \$8,694, trailing the national average of \$12,156 by \$3,462.

California has the same ranking it held last year, despite an almost \$500 increase in PPE from 2016, and reflects a boost in PPE among most other states.

California is in a unique situation compared with the rest of the country. Its schools educate 6.2 million K-12 students, or about one in eight K-12 students nationally; they enroll the largest share of English learners in the U.S.; and 25 percent of California K-12 students are from low-income families, compared with 17 percent for the nation as a whole.

Voter approval of Proposition 30 in 2012 helped increase California's K-12 school spending, and passage of Prop. 55 in November means education funding will be stable for an additional 12 years. But greater investment in education is needed for the state to adequately serve its students.

2017 Ranking of Per-Pupil Expenditures

State	Per-Pupil Expenditures	Rank
Vermont	\$19,654	1
Alaska	\$19,000	2
New York	\$18,191	3
Wyoming	\$17,490	4
Connecticut	\$16,637	5
New Jersey	\$15,946	6
New Hampshire	\$15,386	7
Maine	\$15,193	8
Dist. Of Columbia	\$14,680	9
Rhode Island	\$14,601	10
National Average	\$12,156	N/A
California	\$8,694	46

California is ranked 46th in per-pupil expenditures when figures are adjusted for regional cost differences. Figures based on 2014 data. Source: *Education Week "Quality Counts 2017"*

Bargaining Roundup

Details of these stories at cta.org/bargainingupdates

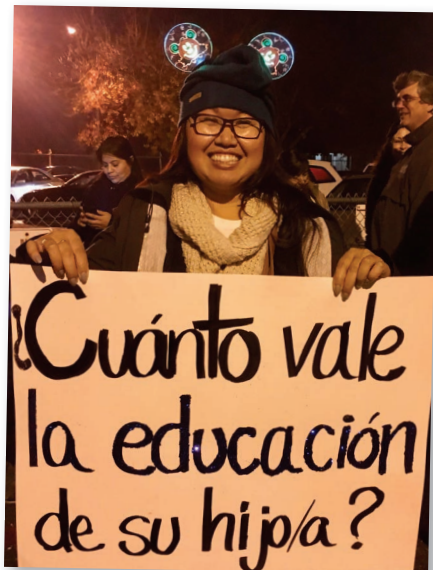
▶ Parent Involvement Key to Stockton Agreement

After 18 months of often contentious negotiations, the **Stockton Teachers Association** (STA) and the Stockton Unified School District (SUSD) reached a tentative agreement in December. The school board ratified the agreement Jan. 10. On Jan. 19, STA membership voted by 90 percent to ratify the agreement.

"This agreement is a good first step in addressing our concerns regarding the district's inability to attract and retain qualified teachers for our students," says STA President Erich Myers.

The agreement resolves the 2015-16 impasse with a three-year contract that includes no cap on health benefits — a major concern for teachers — and three paid days for professional development and class preparation. It provides a 4 percent compensation increase the first year, 3 percent the second year, and 2.5 the third year, with the opportunity to reopen talks in the final year. The contract also addresses assignment and transfer, sick leave and teacher safety.

Myers expresses gratitude to the Stockton parents and community. "We realize how much this community values and supports teachers. That means the world to us and strengthens our resolve to continue to work collaboratively with parents and community members to make Stockton an even better school district."



Stockton Teachers Association members voted to ratify the tentative agreement.

Norwalk-La Mirada Educators Rally

The **Teachers Association of the Norwalk-La Mirada Area** (TANLA), frustrated that little progress has been made in contract negotiations with Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District (NLMUSD), held a rally in December before a school board meeting to urge the district toward a contract settlement.

Teachers are upset that while their contract talks stall, the NLMUSD superintendent continues to gain additional salary increases far exceeding those of educators and support personnel.

"Our members are frustrated with stalled negotiations that prevent our community from attracting the next generation of educators to our local schools," explains TANLA President Clay Walker. "Meanwhile, NLMUSD has given the superintendent a guaranteed 3 percent increase over that which the employees negotiate for each of the next four years. This sets a negative precedent whereby educators are being devalued in comparison to administrators who have no contact with the children of our community."

Perris Goes to Fact-Finding

Mediation has failed to bring about a negotiated settlement between the **Perris Elementary Teachers Association** (PETA) and Perris Elementary School District (PESD). Outstanding issues include classroom preparation time for teachers, compensation, health and welfare benefits, and length of work year.

The next step is for the parties to bring information to a fact-finding panel. Once the panel issues its report, if PESD imposes its "last, best and final" contract offer, PETA can respond through job actions including general strike by the membership.

PETA leadership is hopeful a settlement will be reached that will avert further division and enable PESD to recruit the next generation of teachers for the Perris community.



◀ Alum Rock Seeks Smaller Class Sizes, Raises

Frustrated **Alum Rock Educators Association** (AREA) members in San Jose have been bargaining for a fair contract with the Alum Rock Union Elementary School District for nearly a year. Despite hoarding \$29 million in reserves, the district still refuses to reduce class sizes or provide adequate raises.

"It still appears that teachers are not a priority for this district, and

that's causing some to leave for districts that actually respect them," says Jocelyn Merz, president of the 600-member AREA. "Our salaries rank near the bottom of school districts in Santa Clara County, while top Alum Rock administrators received up to a 22 percent raise."

Class sizes stand at 32 students per teacher in K-3 classrooms, compared with the 24-student maximum in surrounding districts.

On Jan. 3, Alum Rock teachers started a work-to-rule protest, meaning they stopped doing extra work for free. This follows an effective AREA candlelight rally in December, where members sang protest songs, chanted and spoke out at the school board meeting.

Fresno Listens to Parents, Community

Fresno Teachers Association (FTA) invited parents and community to forums as part of its Stand With Students campaign. Hundreds have shown up and told FTA leaders they want smaller classes (average class size is 40), more teachers and support staff, and expanded vocational electives.

With this input, FTA is now bargaining with the district for smaller class sizes, vocational options, school nurses, more support staff including counselors, use of schools as public/community space, development of a parent/educator/community committee to decrease the achievement gap, additional tutoring for students, and salary increases.

In December, Fresno Unified Superintendent Michael Hanson announced he plans to leave the district, effective in August 2017. FTA has clashed with Hanson on several issues, including his refusal to use local control funds to improve learning and teaching environments.

Menifee in Mediation

Menifee Teachers Association (MTA), which represents 14 schools in Menifee and Quail Valley in Riverside County, held a rally in December outside the Menifee Union School District (MUSD) office to urge a mediated settlement in an ongoing contract dispute. Despite 10 negotiation meetings, key issues remain unresolved. A state-appointed mediator has been assigned to try to bring the parties to agreement.

Several tentative agreements have been signed off, such as extending the school year by two days for professional development. MTA negotiators have pressed for a better compensation package to help retain its more than 480 members.

Unresolved issues include salary and special education language to better serve classroom needs of exceptional students.

"We want to welcome the next generation of teachers to Menifee's schools," MTA President Brenda Myers explains. "Competitive salary and benefits are the cornerstone to attracting and retaining those new professionals. With the lowest compensation in the surrounding area and the California teacher shortage intensifying, MUSD is not positioned to bring those new educators to Menifee."



Deal in Coachella Valley ▲

Many months of negotiations and organizing by the **Coachella Valley Teachers Association** culminated in a three-year tentative agreement that should help retain teachers in Coachella Valley Unified School District.

It includes two additional professional development days, and class sizes that are balanced and, for special education, do not exceed state-mandated maximums. It has a retroactive 3 percent increase on the salary schedule and an off-schedule 3 percent bonus for 2015-16. For 2016-17, an additional 3.3 percent retroactive (2.8 percent effective) raise began Jan. 1. In 2017-18 there will be an additional 3 percent raise, and the district will pick up benefit costs over its cap.

“It’s important to give students a voice and space to express themselves, so they can work together to make the changes they want. It allows them to do exceptional things.”

—Eghosa Obaiza, San Ramon Valley Education Association

California High School’s Eghosa Obaiza in front of the poetry “heart” wall in her classroom.

Fighting Back Against Hate

San Ramon school community comes together to make change

By Sherry Posnick-Goodwin Photos by Scott Buschman

In art class at Charlotte Wood Middle School, teacher Gary Leveque and students wear signs around their necks: “Hate Makes Us All Ugly.”

In Jill Watson’s classroom at Twin Creeks Elementary School, a sign tells third-graders “There’s No Place for Hate.”

In Eghosa Obaiza’s classroom at California High School, a huge heart adorns a wall, with the words: “Protect Your Humanity.”

After several well-publicized hate crimes in San Ramon Valley Unified School District during the fall election season, educators are letting students know in no uncertain terms that racism and bullying aren’t tolerated.

San Ramon Valley Education Association (SRVEA) members and others in this upper-class community were shocked by recent incidents, including racial epithets written in a boys’ bathroom with one urinal marked “whites” and another marked “colored.” In a girls’ bathroom, the N-word was scrawled. At elementary schools, students have yelled “Go home” to students of color.

These are not isolated events. They reflect an uptick in hate crimes nationwide, which some researchers attribute to behavior displayed by Donald Trump during the presidential campaign, such as referring to Mexican immigrants as “rapists and criminals,”

calling for a ban on Muslims entering the United States, mocking a disabled reporter, and demeaning women.

The Southern Poverty Law Center has reported more than 1,000 incidents of hateful graffiti, assaults and bullying in the U.S. since the election, with nearly half occurring at K-12 schools and universities. And nearly half of perpetrators directly referenced a candidate and campaign slogans.

Incidents have occurred elsewhere in California. In a survey of 800 CTA members in December, almost half of the respondents said their students needed help coping with the results of the election at school, and more than a quarter said they had seen students using Donald Trump’s example to bully or say offensive things to students of a different race or ethnicity.

This alarming trend has many educators — no matter their political leanings or how they voted — concerned about improving



Far left: Charlotte Wood Middle School Gay Straight Alliance president Evelyn Tackett and GSA adviser/teacher Gary Leveque; left: educator Jill Watson next to a sign in her classroom at Twin Creeks Elementary.

“We must foster an environment where teachers stand up against racism, homophobia and bullying. We need to make students feel comfortable and supported in this country. We must start in our own backyard.”

—Gary Leveque, San Ramon Valley Education Association

school climate and ensuring the safety of all students, especially the most vulnerable populations.

Students must feel safe at school so they can learn, say SRVEA members, who have joined in a communitywide effort of soul-searching and embracing tolerance and inclusiveness.

CAUGHT OFF GUARD

Racism is nothing new and is certainly not unique to San Ramon, observes Kathy Dillingham, a teacher at Venture School, an independent study K-12 campus.

“But with the election, students felt they had the license to say things that they wouldn’t have said before. It’s only a few knuckleheads, but there’s a ripple effect.”

Sadly, it has trickled down to the elementary school level, says Watson, a third-grade teacher at Twin Creeks Elementary, whose children attend school in the district.

“At my daughter’s school, students as young as first grade were told to ‘go back home’ to their own country, even though they were born here. Another little girl was called ‘slant eyes.’ These are things that students and teachers aren’t used to dealing with. The election made children think it was OK to say these kinds of things. Oftentimes kids don’t know what they are saying, but repeat things they hear at home or on TV.”

Four incidents of racist graffiti occurred at California High School, making national news. A student was caught and suspended, and the police were called. But similar crimes were committed by others afterward.

Junior Madison Ellis says the school climate changed during the

election. Trump supporters were gloating, she says, and many students became angry and upset. When the hate crimes went viral, students who loathed such behavior felt that everyone at their school was unfairly labeled a racist.

“We were laughed at all over Twitter and social media platforms, and there was not representation of how the majority of students feel,” she fumes, adding that most students were angry that the perpetrator was only suspended, not expelled.

Christina Monis, also a junior and a Black Student Union (BSU) member, says she is grateful that many educators created a “safe space” after the incidents for students to discuss how they felt.

Obaiza, an English and sociology instructor, held such discussions. She says students shared that they were hearing more hateful things in hallways and out in public, which most attributed to the election.

More students — of all colors — joined the BSU after the crimes to take a stand against racism, says Obaiza, a club adviser. Attendees at meetings increased from 50 to 120 students, and parents also came to show support.

“It was great to see such a strong showing of community,” Obaiza says. “Another silver lining was that the BSU joined with other communities — the Muslim Student Association, the Feminist Club, and the Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) — to improve school culture. Because of what happened, students decided to create something together, rather than be separate entities. It’s important to give students a voice and space to express themselves, so they can work together to make the changes they want. It allows them to do exceptional things.”

MAKING CHANGES TOGETHER

“Our district realized we have to confront racism and bullying directly in whatever form it arrives,” says Leveque, adviser to Charlotte Wood Middle School’s GSA. “We have to come together as teachers, students, administrators and parents. We must foster an environment where teachers stand up against racism, homophobia and bullying. We need to make students feel





California High School students Christina Monis and Madison Ellis.



“To be in a society that honors civility, we must speak out.”

**— Ann Katzburg,
SRVEA president**

Venture School's Kathy Dillingham: With the election, students “felt they had license to say things they wouldn't have before.”

comfortable and supported in this country. We must start in our own backyard.”

State law requires school personnel to take immediate steps to intervene when they witness an act of discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying.

Leveque, the GLBT Equity and Human Rights chair for SRVEA, believes educators sometimes ignore racial or homophobic slurs overheard in class or the hallway, and when they don't call students on it, they send the message that it's acceptable.

“We keep running into the old adage that people are afraid to speak up, unwilling to take a stand or confront such insidious speech in the moment,” he says. “We need to challenge our colleagues to find their courage, check their own bias, and name the form of hate speech in the moment to the perpetrator.”

Shortly after the hate crimes occurred, new Superintendent Rick Schmitt wrote staff a letter. “The words exchanged on the campaign trail and the racist words written on bathroom walls cry out for how much we need to support, teach and listen to our children,” he wrote. To that end, Schmitt said, he and the board of education would take steps to support cross-cultural understanding on campus. Actions that were taken or will be taken include:

- SRVUSD created a task force of administrators, educators, students and other stakeholders to target racism in the district.
- Staff training on how to respond appropriately to incidents of bullying and discrimination is in development.
- A new district Climate Committee will work with middle and high schools and local PTAs on inclusion and diversity.
- Student ambassadors will be trained to promote equity on

campus, and the Anti-Defamation League's “No Place for Hate” program will be implemented.

- Student groups and GSA chapters have made presentations to administrators and school board members about racism and bullying.
- The district sent teachers on a field trip to the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles.
- The school board adopted a resolution that the district will not tolerate any forms of racism or discrimination.

Eighth-grader Evelyn Tackett, president of Charlotte Wood's GSA, thinks the proposed changes are long overdue.

“Many teachers feel uncomfortable with these topics, but they should not be afraid of confronting racism or bullying. They should make it clear that kind of thing is not OK, and listen to students when we have a problem.”

SRVEA President Ann Katzburg, who is Jewish, knows firsthand how hate crimes hurt. Back in high school, a student left a Ku Klux Klan pamphlet of a black man hanging by a noose along with anti-Semitic slogans on her desk. Her teacher was aghast but did nothing. That night, someone painted a swastika on her house.

“My teacher may not have had the tools or knowledge to know how to react, so it's important that we educate our staff. When there is an act of hate, we take these moments and teach our students. To be in a society that honors civility, we must speak out.”

Obaiza is glad the district is taking corrective measures, and even happier to see preventive measures being implemented.

“It begins with curriculum that builds empathy,” she says. “By the time you only focus on consequences, it may be too late.”



Students share their concerns about current events with educator Ramon Espinal.



Keeping Students Safe

Educators work to help students feel supported and focused during an uncertain time

By **Sherry Posnick-Goodwin** Photos by **Scott Buschman**

Ramon Espinal's second-graders at Rosa Parks Elementary School in San Diego are discussing current events, including the recent presidential election.

One girl confides she is "scared" her parents may be sent back to Guatemala.

A boy says that his parents "don't have papers," or are undocumented. "If they have to go back to Mexico, I will be very sad. I'll have to live with my grandma."

How changes in the White House and Congress may affect certain student populations has stirred up fear and anxiety in schools and campuses across the country. In California, CTA members are striving to help students feel safe, supported and focused. But it's not easy.

"My kids are not that clear on what a presidential election really means," says Espinal, San Diego Education Association (SDEA). "But when they start talking about how they don't want to be separated from their parents, the hair on my arms goes straight up."

Espinal fights tears when talking privately about challenges his students may face. But in the classroom, he projects

calm and reassurance that school is a safe place.

"I think it's helped. Many of them took a deep breath and showed physical relief."

He encourages youngsters to think positive.

"I don't want you to be afraid," he says. "Instead, focus on what you'd like to be. Some of you want to be teachers, or firefighters, or police officers, or artists. These are the kinds of things you should be thinking about."

STUDENTS ANXIOUS, SCARED

The election traumatized students everywhere, say CTA members. In communities with high numbers of students who feel marginalized by the new administration — including students of color, undocumented immigrants, Muslims, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning/queer youth — that's especially true.

Elvia Estrella, a counselor at San Ysidro High School in San Diego, notices students are less forthcoming with personal information since the election.

"I recently asked a student who was

frequently absent and making little progress whether his parents were involved," she recalls. "He said, 'My dad is around, but we don't talk about him.' When we developed more trust, he revealed his dad is undocumented and fears deportation. It broke my heart. In my 12 years as a school counselor, I've never heard that kind of response."

Estrella, a member of the Sweetwater Counseling and Guidance Association, says she works harder since the election to establish trust with students who have become fearful of sharing information with school staff.

Across town at Lincoln High School, many students walked out the day after the election. History teacher Kiki Ochoa admired their willingness to take a stand and protest peacefully. Undocumented students living in the shadows who chose to walk out told him that for the very first time, they understood what freedom felt like.

"Some said that they feel disenfranchised, that democracy doesn't function for them," says Ochoa, an SDEA member. "But I want students to





Left to right: San Ysidro High School counselor Elvia Estrella, Lincoln High School history teacher Kiki Ochoa, and Cabrillo Middle School educator Tracy Pope. (Photo of Pope by Mike Myslinski)

understand that democracy takes many forms — and only some of what happens is through the ballot box. For example, we did not vote away slavery or vote in women’s rights or GLBT rights. They were drafted as legislation and signed into law because movements forced the hands of elected representatives through protest and advocacy. You have to look at the entire process.”

Many of Ochoa’s students are eligible for DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), an executive order issued by President Obama in 2012 allowing undocumented students to attend school and work. There is fear President Trump may repeal it. (The DREAM [Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors] Act, which would have granted legal status to undocumented immigrants brought to the U.S. as children, failed to pass in Congress. Some “Dreamers” are eligible for DACA. In many cases, Dreamers have lived and gone to school here and identify as American.)

Ochoa’s students wrote letters to Trump, and all of them began with congratulations.

“My parents are undocumented and neither of them are murderers and rapists like you claim all immigrants are,” wrote one student. “They came to this country looking for a better future because life back home wasn’t good. If it weren’t for my parents immigrating, I wouldn’t have the opportunities for a better life. I am excited yet terrified to see what you will make of this country and my family.”

Another student described being “angry and depressed” at the election outcome and frightened by the accompanying violence. “I’m not scared anymore. If your policies hurt anyone, you best believe I will be out there in the streets, protesting for what I believe is right.”

Tracy Pope, a teacher at Cabrillo Middle School in

Silicon Valley, also thought it would be cathartic for students to write letters to Trump. Some shared deportation fears; others expressed anger over his treatment of women or global concerns.

“A great number of students wrote about his tendency to shoot from the hip when he speaks,” says Pope, United Teachers of Santa Clara. “They told him they are worried he’ll say the wrong thing to world leaders and get us into a war or some other situation with dire consequences.”

WHAT TO TELL STUDENTS?

Because so many students were upset about the election results, Pope broke her own rule and shared who she had voted for: Hillary Clinton. But she worried about being insensitive to children whose families supported Trump, and encouraged them to speak with her. At times, she felt she was venturing into uncharted territory.

“It was such a bizarre campaign, I didn’t know what to tell them at times,” she admits. “Trump promises to build a wall and deport people. I don’t want to make promises about what might or might not happen and see that promise get broken. But I also want my students to feel safe. So I read them my Facebook post: ‘All of us here would do anything and everything we can to keep you safe and protect you. OMG we love you because at Cabrillo, we are family.’”

Students taught by Claire Merced, a teacher at San Francisco’s Thurgood Marshall Academic High School, were part of a wave of teens immigrating from Central America two years ago. Most live with relatives and are eligible for DACA. During classroom discussions, she reminds them that San Francisco is a sanctuary city; she tells them daily to focus on their studies and academic future, keep up school attendance and avoid trouble.

“I believe in their potential to become absolutely productive in our community,” says Merced, United Educators of San Francisco. “I advise them not to engage in anything that

“Some said that they feel disenfranchised, that democracy doesn’t function for them. But I want students to understand that democracy takes many forms — and only some of what happens is through the ballot box.”

**—Kiki Ochoa,
San Diego Education Association**



Far left, Muslim students enjoy an event in San Diego supporting diversity.

Left, UTLA educator Jorge Boche.

could be misconstrued as being illegal, and to be very careful in their social lives and at parties.”

Many school districts, including Los Angeles Unified (LAUSD), San Francisco, Santa Clara, Sweetwater, San Diego, Santa Ana and Oakland, have passed resolutions declaring schools to be sanctuaries or safe spaces.

United Teachers Los Angeles member Jorge Boche, who works with Dreamer students in LAUSD, says UTLA and district staff are providing information about what to do if students are stopped by police or border patrol agents, and LAUSD is creating a “family preparedness plan” in the event of a crisis.

It also has a hotline for students traumatized about the election, and educators work closely with immigrant rights organizations to support students.

“The hotline assists students with de-escalating their anxiety,” says Boche, adding that his school scheduled an assembly around the Jan. 20 inauguration so students could express themselves peaceably — and also learn more about the checks and balances of the U.S. justice system and what to expect with a new administration.

Boche says the key to helping students cope is offering hope and empowerment, emphasizing that we can’t change the past, but we can work together to improve the future.

Tips to Ease Student Anxiety

When discussing current events that may affect students:

- Be calm and reassure them that school is a safe space.
- Encourage them to think positively about their future, including doing well in school.
- Establish a trusting relationship.
- Encourage peaceful civic engagement on relevant issues.
- Focus on facts and historical precedent in class lessons.
- Work with your chapter and school to provide resources.

Asking students to create plans to improve their schools and communities can alleviate this sense of powerlessness.

SAN DIEGO TAKES A STAND

Telling students you are there for them is one thing; showing them is another. On Dec. 14, SDEA members, administrators and community groups held an after-school event, “Celebration of Light: Standing Up for San Diego’s Diverse Students and Families,” at the Ballard Center to make that clear. It attracted hundreds of students, parents and stakeholders. Booths offered a wide array of information to assist diverse youth, including undocumented, LGBTQ+ and Muslim youth. While the message was serious, there was also food, fun and entertainment.

Crawford High School twins Zahra and Naimo Aden, 17, who are Muslim, were happy to see such an outpouring of support.

“I’m really glad to see people advocating for us,” said Zahra. “Plus, it’s fun.”

The celebration launched a campaign by SDEA and the district to provide greater resources for vulnerable students in San Diego, a city that borders Mexico and has a large and visible Immigration and Customs Enforcement presence.

“We are just getting started,” says SDEA President Lindsay Burningham. “We are sending the message to our students and families: We’ve got your back.”

On page 51 is a sign you can cut out and post to let students know they’re in a safe zone.





Cut out the sign on the facing page and post in your classroom or school.

Make Your School a Safe Zone

Our schools should be havens — every student deserves a safe, welcoming, affirming learning environment. Unfortunately, the recent increase in hate speech and hostile acts directed at students in schools has left many students feeling scared and anxious.

Want to create a **Safe Zone** at your school? Check out our toolkit at cta.org/safetyresources for

information and resources. It includes a sample school board resolution that supports schools as Safe Zones, and posters that can be printed and displayed in classrooms and around school.

Steps you can take right now:

- Take the pledge to create safe learning environments for every student at nea.org/bullyfree.

- Report hate incidents at your school.
- Read our tips on how educators can respond to hateful words, actions and images in school in the November/December 2016 *Educator*, page 11, at cta.org/educator.
- Learn about U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids, their impact on public education, and what you can do, at bit.ly/2jEQGmG.
- Know your responsibilities as an educator to provide all students with access to equal education. See bit.ly/2jRU4s6.
- Download NEA's bully-free toolkits for education support professionals, who often notice bullying before others, at nea.org/home/63946.htm.
- Urge your schools and districts to make available resources for students to know their rights and what they should do if they (and their families) are contacted by ICE.

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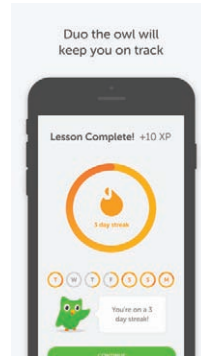
By Terry Ng

Over a thousand apps are added every day to Apple and Google's app stores — there are now more than 4 million. Here are our picks of 2016 education-related apps. All are free for iOS and Android.



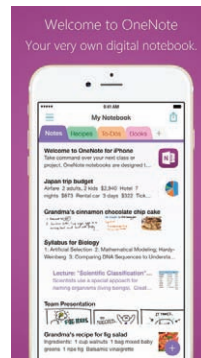
Classtree

Classtree is a secure and private communication channel which manages e-signature, consent forms, real-time reporting, event reminders, announcements, surveys and photo sharing. Safe and easy way to deal with parents that saves you hours. No more missed permission slips!



Duolingo

Duolingo is a fun app to help you learn languages, and can complement classroom instruction. Multiple languages are available. Students get personalized feedback and practice, including conversations with smart bots, and you track their progress through a dashboard. (You can also brush up on a language before summer travel.)



Microsoft OneNote 2016

Do you scribble ideas on napkins and Post-Its? Or are precise outlines more your style? Whichever it is, OneNote's got you covered. Type, write or draw with the freehand feel of pen to paper. OneNote helps you create, organize and share notes, class lectures and class calendars online. It even records audio. Access your notes from anywhere, on any device.



Google Calendar's Goals

Goals can help you achieve your goals, whether it's reading more or working out regularly. The always-on digital assistant manages your schedule in real time. Did a staff meeting come up that creates a conflict? No problem. Goals will automatically shift things around.



Facebook Messenger's M

M is your personal assistant. Using human and artificial intelligence, it can help plan your day, shop for classroom supplies and warn you of rain. Group capabilities include holding "office hours" for students or parents, conference calls and group conversations — handy for class collaboration.

In Service to Others

Young students learn kindness, and much more, with 'Sacks of Hope'

Educator Leon Lewandowski started a random act of kindness (RAOK) challenge in 2012. Each year since then, the Santa Barbara Teachers Association member has asked his combination class of third- and fourth-graders at Franklin Elementary School to do one RAOK every day for the month of April, and has broadened the effort with social media, writing assignments about what they learned, and even some friendly competition with other groups doing RAOKs.

When he told this year's class, pictured at right, about the challenge, they wanted to do something big.

The 25 students decided they wanted to assemble 25 big bags for homeless community members, filled with about 30 essentials. (The school is near Santa Barbara's main street, where many homeless congregate.) Students created a wish list of items for the bags, including toothbrushes, toothpaste, healthy snack bars and hand-warmers, along with bigger-ticket items such as new sleeping bags. They named the project "Sacks of Hope."

"We chose this project because we felt bad about the homeless," says student Irvin. "So we had an idea about helping them. We came up with Sacks of Hope."

Sacks of Hope is run by the students, though Lewandowski helps them solicit donations from local and national companies and run a collection drive at Franklin. The students are writing business letters this winter to ask businesses and other potential donors for assistance in reaching their spring goal.

"What I find inspiring is that these kids, who don't have a lot, are motivated to help others who are less fortunate than they are," says Lewandowski. "We'd love it if other schools made Sacks of Hope in their communities as well."

Research on students who volunteer and help others has shown that they learn respect, responsibility, compassion and kindness — soft skills that some experts say are more important to future success than hard skills such as reading, math and science. Volunteering also encourages civic responsibility among students, and helps them identify their own interests and talents.

"I'm learning that one small thing can become a great big thing if you put effort in what you're thinking and what you believe," says student Aide.



"We chose this project because we can do something that can change the world."

Follow the Sacks of Hope project at [#SacksOfHope](#) and [#WatchUsSoar](#). To learn more, make a donation, or start a similar project, see [sacksofhope.weebly.com](#).

You can read Leon Lewandowski's "Your Voice" perspective about the random acts of kindness challenge, which ran in the April 2016 *Educator*, at [cta.org/educator](#).



Paraprofessional Carol Courneya and special education teacher Alissa Glass walk at Beverly Hills High School.

Big Steps

It's a group effort to BHEAlthy in 90210

By **Sherry Posnick-Goodwin**
Photos by **Scott Buschman**

Educators in Beverly Hills are taking steps (literally) to become healthier, and are setting an excellent example for school staff throughout the state.

Last year, the Beverly Hills Education Association (BHEA) launched a wellness program for members called BHEAlthy. Members who participate, including classified and certificated staff, are committed to taking more steps, on campus and off. The more they walk, the more points they get.

They submit the number of miles they walk or run each week, using apps such as MyFitnessPal, Nike+ and FitBit. The mileage for each participant is tabulated on a weekly basis. At the end of a semester, BHEA members receive prizes based on top overall participant, highest percentage participation at a school site, and highest average miles per member at a school site. There's even a sponsor — a local company donates bottled water to the cause.

"It's a way to get our members thinking about their health and motivate everyone to exercise more," says BHEA President Telly Tse, a special education teacher at Beverly Hills High School, who charts everyone's mileage as one of his official duties. "It also brings a sense of fun

and competition to the workplace. And exercise is a great way to reduce stress."

and competition to the workplace. And exercise is a great way to reduce stress."

Approximately 50 out of 400 members have taken part. BHEA hopes to recruit more members after the start of the new year, when people tend to focus on becoming healthier. The goal is for members to increase activity, not necessarily lose pounds. But often that happens along the way.

"When I started teaching, I was 40 pounds heavier than I am now," says Tse. "When you go to teacher conferences, you can't help notice that a lot of us could improve our health. It's important because it not only benefits us, but the kids. Healthier teachers have more energy in the classroom."

Carol Courneya, a paraprofessional at Beverly Hills High, began walking and occasionally running around the school track during her lunch hour. Now she feels healthier and is starting to see results.

"It's fun to compete with your colleagues," says Courneya. "Telly records our information, and we can see how everyone is doing. So far, there's about 10 to 20 BHEA members participating per site."

Being part of the competition makes educators more aware of how they traverse Beverly Hills High, an enormous campus where a golf cart is often the preferred travel method for staff to get from one end of the school to another in a hurry.

"Now, I always take the stairs — and no golf cart for me," says special education teacher Alissa Glass, whose Fitbit records her mileage and heart rate.

Alana Castanon, a STEM teacher at Beverly Vista School, says participation has been a bonding experience for BHEA members, and has provided something to talk about besides work. She was excited to win a Starbucks gift card for her efforts.

"Participation made me feel better. Last year, I set a goal to run my first half marathon, and I accomplished that goal. I was proud of myself. Our jobs are very taxing, both physically and mentally, so keeping up with your physical health is a great way to stay at the top of your game. Our health is everything"

While BHEAlthy got a positive reception from most members, some questioned its merits.

"One or two people asked, 'Why are you doing this?'" recalls Tse. "They said, 'Shouldn't the union be doing more important things?'"

He encouraged them to see their health as a priority. Negotiating a good salary and benefits is important. But so is being healthy enough to enjoy it, he pointed out.

"Focusing on maintaining wellness should always be an important aspect of union work," says Tse. "It's also a lot of fun. I'd definitely encourage other chapters to give it a try."

"A lot of us could improve our health. It's important because it not only benefits us, but the kids. Healthier teachers have more energy in the classroom."

— Telly Tse,
Beverly Hills Education Association president

Local Educators Make Good

Temecula Valley chapter celebrates graduates-turned-returning teachers

By Ed Sibby

TO STRENGTHEN THEIR local chapter, members of the Temecula Valley Educators Association (TVEA) worked with Temecula Valley Unified School District (TVUSD) to recognize nearly 100 graduates who have joined the profession and taken teaching positions in TVUSD.

This special group of alumni was honored before a district meeting on Nov. 15. Every returning educator received a certificate acknowledging their status as a former graduate of the district and thanks from school board members and superintendents for their commitment to the local education community.

For Michelle Truax, who attended Temecula Valley High School when it opened in 1985 and graduated in 1988, the ceremony was an opportunity to share her thanks for the exceptional public school education she received.

“Temecula is a special place, and that’s why I chose to bring my kids up here and become a teacher,” she said.

TVEA President Jeff Kingsberg explained that the chapter’s immediate goal was to recognize those who are giving back in serving the students of the district from where they graduated, noting that these are “community leaders who will drive our schools forward for the next 15 to 30 years.”

The event also served as an authentic relationship-building opportunity that celebrated member commitment and educator impact.

LCAP forum

TVEA has also taken a leadership role in the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) process, by hosting a community forum for parents and educators at Margarita Middle School in early December.



TVEA and the school district honor former students who are now teachers at local schools.

The 50-plus attendees were reminded that school districts must arrive at their LCAP through public meetings with stakeholders. LCAPs need to align with eight priorities designated by the state, which involve indicators such as graduation rates, readiness for college and careers, progress of English learners, suspension rates, and math and English language arts assessments for grades 3-8. The LCAP outlines not only how progress will be measured against local goals, but also how funding will be spent.

TVEA used CTA’s Advocacy Agenda in developing the program and focused on several key areas:

A well-rounded education. On hand to meet with parents and community stakeholders were more than a dozen LCAP specialists in areas such as PE, visual and performing arts, literacy, and mathematics.

Teaching all students. A breakout session focused on instructional needs for English learners, to ensure these students have equal opportunity to gain skills needed for school success.

Family and community engagement. Food and refreshments were served to students and families before the forum commenced; TVEA members participated with parents in breakout sessions and discussion groups.

“It is our duty as the closest link to students and parents in the public education system to engage them in the discussion of local community needs and priorities,” said Kingsberg. “I’m pleased our members are engaged in steps to put the ‘local’ into our district’s Local Control and Accountability Plan.”

TVEA is considering a follow-up session this spring.

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